

EVANGELICAL
PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE:
BEING
FOURTEEN
SERMONS,

Preached in the Parish-Church of
St MARY MAGDALEN in OXFORD,

On the following SUBJECTS:

The State of Innocence.	Redemption by JESUS CHRIST.
The Corruption of Nature.	Salvation by Grace.
The Deceitfulness and Cor- ruption of the Heart.	The Nature of true Holiness.
The Spirituality of the Law.	The Fruits of the Spirit.
The Penalty of Disobedience.	The Necessity of personal Holiness.
	The Means of Holiness.
	The Blessedness of the Righteous.

By the Reverend THOMAS HAWEIS,
Late of St *Mary Magdalen-Hall*, OXFORD; and Chaplain
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The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.

L O N D O N:

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M.DCC.LXIII.



P R E F A C E.

THE following Discourses are sent into the world, to obviate the manifold misconceptions and misrepresentations which the Author of them has lain under. As they contain all the grand points of Christianity, and are a faithful epitome of all the Author's Preaching, they will best serve to declare what those doctrines are, which, as a Minister of the Gospel, he has thought it his duty to inculcate. Being thankful that he was educated in the communion of the Church of England, he is much more so, that in the same he hath been called to the honour of ministering in holy things. Her only authentic standard of doctrine, exhibited in her Articles and Homilies, which he was required solemnly to subscribe, he professes himself to be conscientiously attached to, from a real persuasion that they contain the solid truths of God's Word. How carefully he hath followed that form of sound words, a comparison of the ensuing Discourses with those Articles and Homilies will best determine.

As by the Royal Declaration prefixed to the Articles he is forbidden, so he presumes not to take them in any sense but that which a literal and grammatical construction of them imports; and he knows no authority by which any Minister of the Church of England can indulge himself in a greater latitude of interpretation.

As the Author cannot but regard subscriptions as bringing the soul under the deepest obligations to sincerity before the great Searcher of hearts, who requireth truth in the inward parts, he cannot think of those who in any degree allow themselves to trifle or prevaricate therewith, but as of men devoid of conscience towards GOD, and of honesty towards man.

That the Reader may have some general notion beforehand of what he is to expect; the following abstract of the ensuing Discourses is laid before him.

The Divinity of the SON and SPIRIT, co. eternal and co-equal with the FATHER, not the idol-monster of inferior divinity, is here maintained, in full opposition to the Arian and Semi-Arian; whose blasphemy, though more specious, is not less real than the more avowed and open blasphemy of the Socinian.

The maintainers of the doctrine of the rectitude of human nature, and the freedom of man's choice to good as to evil, will find these proud imaginations attacked, he hopes laid low to the ground, even in the dust, by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD. The strong evidences of a fallen and corrupted nature, with its dire effects, are produced and confirmed; and the inability of man in his fallen state to any thing but evil, clearly, he trusts, made manifest.

The extent, purity, and spirituality of GOD's Law are laid open, that the conscience may discover and feel its transgressions against it. The eternal obligation of this Law is shewn; its awful sanctions declared; the impossibility of obeying it as a covenant

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nant of life evinced; and consequently the conviction of our state, as a state of helpless guilt, evidenced.

The one great glorious and all-sufficient oblation of the SON of GOD for the sins of the world, as a true and real sacrifice, atonement and propitiation, is pleaded for; its necessity and influence proved; and the various blessings obtained for sinners thereby, set forth.

Faith, as the only means of justification and acceptance with GOD, is pleaded for, from considerations demonstrating the impossibility of righteousness before GOD any other way. And as Works of any sort are not admitted as the condition of our pardon and acceptance with GOD, the position that we are justified by Faith only, is maintained and vindicated.

The Works of Piety and Virtue which become men professing godliness, are at large opened, and the necessity of them enforced, from the only true principle of Faith which worketh by Love. The Antinomian blasphemy is rebuked and censured.

Finally, The means of Grace are strongly urged, and the diligent use of them shewn to be the only method of obtaining advancement in the divine life.

The blessedness of the religion of JESUS concludes the whole, as the natural result of the principles and practice above recommended.

These are the grand outlines of the following Sermons; and as they are the most essential matters which

which relate to salvation, they deserve a serious and attentive perusal.

The Gospel of CHRIST alone is the power of GOD unto salvation; and though many among ourselves have arisen speaking perverse things, as if a man, whatever were his opinions, provided he was sincere in them and walked conscientiously according to them, was in a state of safety; yet the word of GOD seems to speak differently, that there is salvation in no Name but that of JESUS. And our Reformers were not afraid of the censure of uncharitableness, when they denounced a curse upon the maintainers of so latitudinarian an opinion.

It is earnestly to be wished, that every man who is called a lover of truth may read without prejudice, and judge with candor. As the great Searcher of hearts knows the design of these writings, they are by earnest prayer commended to his blessing; and should they prove the means of bringing but one soul to the knowledge of JESUS, and obedience to the truth, this labour of love will be amply repaid.

Remember, Reader, that awful day which is near, even at the door, when thou must answer for having seen, and I for having written these Discourses: Happy will it be, if we may then together give in our account with joy and not with sorrow.

OCTOBER 20,

1762.

T. H.

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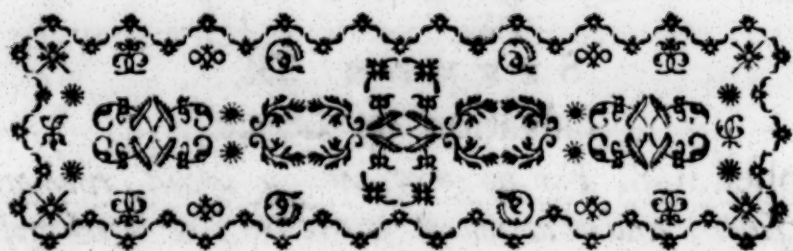
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S E R M O N I.

Of Man's State of Innocence.



GENESIS I. 26.

*And God said, Let us make man in our image,
after our likeness.*

 H A T man once enjoyed a state of greater moral rectitude than he doth at present was an opinion universally received in the heathen world. Their poets describe this happy state as favoured with the visits of their gods, as distinguished with the highest simplicity of manners, as blessed with the spontaneous productions of the earth, and abounding with universal peace and joy; from which con-
B curring

curring circumstances of felicity they have given it the title of "The golden age." Corrupted as their relations are, they plainly indicate the source from whence originally they arose; and amidst all the dark shades of ignorance and error some bright strokes of traditionary truth remain. For that man came not from the hand of his Creator the deformed and wretched creature he now appears, is certain: and we are no longer left to vague traditions and uncertain conjectures about it, but enjoy from the mouth of him, whose hand fashioned and formed us, the account of his own workmanship.

The creation of the heavens and the earth, with all their hosts, by the Almighty *fiat*, is in the preceding verses with the most sublime simplicity and brevity declared to us: when, to grace their new creation, and as the last stroke of infinite wisdom, power and love, consultation is held between the divine persons¹, and man is the result of it: Man, to be created in the image of God, as his representative and vicegerent here below, and as the head of the whole family on earth, by whom they should render unto their great Creator due homage and adoration.

³³ He

¹ Gen. i. 26.

"He spake and it was done:" for will and deed with God continually coexist. Behold then the man! "created after the image of "God": adorned with every perfection of mind and body the nature he possessed was capable of; and receiving the divine approbation, pronouncing him "very good" ² ".

This happy state of man, though but of short duration, well deserves our consideration. Whether to affect our hearts in the view of what we are, compared with what we were designed to be, or to endear to us the Redeemer, the second man from heaven, ordained to be the repairer of the breach the fall hath made; or finally to make us long after the restoration of this original righteousness in part below, and to wait in hope for the fulness of it above; when our Redemption obtained for us and begun on earth shall be completed in heaven.

I shall endeavour therefore, agreeable to the words chosen, To set before you some views of man such as he was originally created: Shew you the blessing and felicity he

B 2

enjoyed:

² Gen. i. 31.

enjoyed : Indicate the cause of his departure from it; and how we are affected thereby.

" GOD made man upright, " his own image was stamped upon him, as far as his nature could be he was a faithful mirror, reflecting the wisdom, righteousness, and holiness of his Creator. GOD's great design in all his works is the manifestation of his own glory. GOD's glory is then manifested when the thing formed answers exactly the end for which he created it. All the creatures in their place and state, from the highest archangel to the lowest of rational beings, are therein, by the law of their nature as dependents, called upon to fashion themselves after the rule prescribed by their great Original. They are then perfect in their generation when they do so, and GOD is glorified in them. Man in innocence was thus " perfect and entire, lacking nothing : " his heart had written upon it the approbation of GOD's will, and possessed a disposition to obey in whatever particulars it might be revealed to him; so that in general the whole frame of his nature exactly coincided with the rule of his duty.

But

But to take a more minute survey of his situation.

I. Of his intellectual powers. God in creating the first man after his own image, "created him in knowledge"⁴.

His natural knowledge of the world in which he was placed, and all the things and creatures around him, was no doubt most exact and comprehensive. A specimen of which we have immediately after his creation, when "God brought unto Adam every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof"⁵. But this was the least considerable part of his knowledge.

He had the clearest knowledge of God himself, as the author of his being, "in whom he lived and moved"; of the bright perfections of the JEHOVAH, who had made all things around him to cry aloud, and proclaim his wisdom, grace and power, and of the peculiar obligations lying upon him, not only as a dependent subject, but as a favoured

B 3

child;

⁴ Coloss. iii. 10.

⁵ Gen. ii. 19.

child; in whom therefore the constraints of love united with the bonds of duty.

He had the most perfect views of the rule of his obedience. Knowledge must precede obedience. Where no law is, there is neither transgression nor obedience. Where no knowledge is, the law cannot bind. And perfection of obedience can only follow from perfect views of the rule prescribed and conviction of the obligation to obey. But this the first man had, and he knew also that the laws he was under were not merely arbitrary commands, but in themselves most holy, just and good, fit for God to enjoin, and meet for him to obey, resulting from the very relation they bore to each other; and withal that to submit to these laws was perfect freedom, his own happiness arising from the exactness of his conformity to them.

2. Of his moral powers. These corresponded with the intellectual. Whatever his understanding proposed as fit, his will readily consented to. God had written his law, not as afterwards on tables of stone, but deeper on the fleshly tables of his heart. In this disposition to righteousness and true holiness did his likeness to God especially consist.

The

The excellence and perfection of obedience depends on the full and free choice and approbation of the will. Hence after the first sin man's unrighteousness appears, and consists most in the alienation of his will from GOD. This in its original was as exact a copy of GOD's will, as the impression on the wax is of the corresponding seal; and it followed invariably, as the needle doth the pole, the manifestation of Duty which GOD revealed. His will was not formed and set merely in a state of equal freedom to choose the good and refuse the evil; nor rested in an indifference to either; (for this would have been in itself faulty, as GOD's service to a will rightly constituted can never appear a matter of indifference and indetermination;) but it was habitually inclined to good, and averse to evil: so that whilst yet the power of falling remained, its natural bent was fixed intently in obedience to the divine commands. No necessity indeed impelled it. For what glory could have arisen to GOD from service constrained and necessary? Or what obedience, properly so called, could man have shewn, if fate, not choice, had determined his conduct? The freedom of his service was that wherein he was to answer the end of his

creation. Hence arose the mutability of his state; though free to stand, yet free to fall. Yet not so free to fall as stand; whilst all things within and without him conspired to engage his heart to God, and to fix unwavering his choice on that which was ordained his duty.

3. His affections, passions, and all the inferior faculties of the soul, were framed in due subserviency to the great design, as so many ready servants to execute what reason dictated, and the will approved.

Thus the entire soul of man was then the habitation of the Deity. He daily beheld, what he required, the universal service paid him. These passions, now become so turbulent and unruly, each ministered in humble subjection before the LORD. LOVE stood before the altar, and pouring on the sacred incense, kept up the hallowed flame. HATRED OF SIN (for yet no other ground of hatred was known) hatred of sin guarded every avenue of the temple, and kept the gates that nothing might enter which defileth or maketh unclean. HOPE lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and shewed, by the

the intenseness of her countenance, where her anchor fixed. FEAR, with reverential awe, bowed down before the sanctuary, where yet no veil had hid the presence of the Deity. Joy told its raptures in hosannas of never-ceasing praise; and sought on earth to join those songs which beings of superior excellence poured forth before the throne of God. Whilst MEMORY unfolded the volume of divine mercies, and stood in pleasing contemplation revolving the past transactions. And CONSCIENCE, yet unfullied, beheld, as GOD's vicegerent, the hallowed service, and gave its approbation, as the voice of God.

Thus was his soul beautiful in holiness, and his body, where yet unbridled appetite and lawless lust had found no place, yielded every member an instrument of righteousness unto holiness. Such was man. "God beheld and blessed them, and bid them multiply and replenish the earth", that there might be a generation to serve him, sharing in all their parents excellence. GOD could not but be pleased with the work of his hands; and, as the present mark of his regard, crowned him with glory, honour, bliss and immortality.

1. Man

I. Man enjoyed a state of great glory. It is the conjecture of an ingenious author, that man in innocence was clothed with a visible glory: such as we still image to ourselves, whenever we form an idea of an angelic vision; or according to that representation of the Psalmist, that when GOD appears, he clothes himself ^{ss} with light as with a garment.^{ss} It must be owned, that there is more than one text of scripture that seems to allude to this. And the transaction on the mount, when the ^{ss} body of JESUS was transfigured, and became white and glistering ^{6ss}, compared with the promise, of ^{ss} being made ^{ss} like unto his glorious body at the resurrection day ^{7ss}, seems to make it not improbable, that such external irradiation might be the attendant on man's innocence until sin had uncovered his nakedness. Besides, if *Moses* by once beholding, not the face of GOD, but his back parts only, brought down from that vision ^{ss} a glory on his countenance, ^{ss} which the children of *Israel* could not look ^{ss} upon ^{8ss}, why might not the frequent, and as it seems familiar intercourse, which man in paradise had with the blessed GOD, leave
deeper

⁶ Matt. xvii. 2.

⁷ Phil. iii. 21.

⁸ Exod. xxxiv. 30, 33.

deeper impressions of glory behind it? But however this may be, we are sure his body became the divine Architect. The last and most excellent of all his works below. And if, corrupted as it is now become, we cannot without some admiration regard it, "so fear-
^{ss} fully and wonderfully is it made ⁹ ^{ss}, what may we not conceive of its paradisaical glory? His soul, the foregoing description intimates to have been surpassing excellent: and united, such a body and such a soul could not but form a creature, that, as the sun in the firmament, shone forth the chief of all the works of God.

2. Honour was heaped on him with a liberal hand. By nature, "but little lower
^{ss} than the angels ¹⁰ ^{ss}. By grant, endowed with a dominion coextensive with the regions he was placed in. The universal monarch of this lower world, and all things in it. ^{ss} God put all things under his feet, all
^{ss} sheep and oxen, the beasts of the field, and
^{ss} the fowls of the air, and whatsoever passeth
^{ss} through the paths of the sea ¹¹ ^{ss}. The majesty of man impressed an awe upon the
whole

⁹ Psal. cxxxix. 14.

¹⁰ Psal. viii. 5.

¹¹ Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8.

whole creation ; their Maker's visible representative on earth.

3. Blessings surrounded him on every side. Within every thing was peaceful and serene. His soul, like the smooth surface of the sea, unruffled by the least blast of air, had yet felt no tumult of contending corruption ; but satisfied in itself, and conscious of its innocence, was replenished with consolations as from " a well of water springing up into everlasting life " ¹² : whilst above all, the presence and favour of GOD, the most intimate and endeared communion with him, and the constant notices of his love, could not but minister the most ravishing delight. And without, all nature was formed to minister not only to his wants, but innocently to gratify his senses. " Whatever was pleasant to the sight, or good for food " ¹³, arose in *Eden's* happy ground ; the " almighty husbandman had planted it " ¹⁴, purely to bless his favourite man : and what could be wanting, where GOD vouchsafed to prepare for him a residence of bliss ?

4. Immortality crowned the whole. What he was, he would for ever have been : or if any

¹² John iv. 14.

¹³ Gen. ii. 9.

¹⁴ John xv. 1. Gen. ii. 8.

any change succeeded, it would have been a change from glory to glory. When translated to a higher place of bliss, his obedience, however undeserving the reward, should be still more abundantly repaid. "The tree of life"¹⁵ sacramentally sealed the continuance of his bliss, whilst he persisted in obedience. And the declaration concerning "the tree of knowledge"¹⁶ implied farther in it a promise, that his life should be eternal if he did not eat of the forbidden fruit. In its constitution, the natural body either had not the seeds of dissolution, or some powerful quality implanted in the tree of life might prevent it, or from God the fountain of life his body might immediately be fed with living streams. Certain it is, that death and all its hateful evils, disease, decay and pain were unknown, until sin broke down the wall, and introduced the monster pregnant with woe.

For such high favours, to be continued to his posterity, God might justly have demanded from him whatever marks of allegiance and fidelity he chose to impose: but herein, how wondrous was the divine goodness! he would not debar him the least satisfaction

¹⁵ Gen. ii. 9.¹⁶ Gen. ii. 17.

tisfaction he enjoyed; but chose only one single tree to be the test of his obedience, "forbidding him to eat of it on penalty of death"¹⁷. The thing was in itself indifferent; the command of GOD enjoined it; it was the most easy to be complied with; and simply required acquiescence in the divine will. Who would not have been content to rest the issue of his life and death on such a test, especially in the hands of One so highly furnished with every good and perfect gift?

Yet here, astonishing to tell! the scripture informs us that man, through the suggestions of the devil, was seduced. His heart, led first by reasoning to entertain unhallowed desires after knowledge; then looking until lust kindled, he is at last tempted to "pluck" and eat¹⁸: and as the fatal consequence, to forfeit all his bliss, bring down the wrath denounced, and render himself obnoxious to death spiritual, temporal and eternal. Short is the dire description: yet long and dreadfully felt the issue. A thousand questions which follow from the pride which now possesses us, of why and how this was permitted, the holy Ghost hath been pleased not to resolve.

¹⁷ Gen. ii. 17.¹⁸ Gen. iii. 6.

solve. He relates the simple fact, commands implicit faith. To reason here is to disbelieve; that so it was, is enough for us to know.

How deeply we are affected by the first man's disobedience, what we feel may tell us. *Adam*, our father and representative, in whom the whole nature of man then subsisted, tainted his blood by this atrocious act of treason. An act of the most complicated baseness and unprovoked rebellion. We were in his loins. ¹⁹ "In *Adam* all died". By one man sin ²⁰ "entred into the world, and death by sin; and ²¹ so death passed upon all, forasmuch as all ²² have sinned". Man's nature is wholly fallen under the curse. And as our Articles declare "every child of *Adam* born into the "world, doth for this deserve God's wrath "and damnation". I shall rest here for the present, purposing to consider more distinctly the consequences of the fall in some ensuing discourses: concluding the present with the following observations.

I. What an alteration hath passed on the nature of man? "How is the gold become "dim! How is the most fine gold changed²²?"
Who

¹⁹ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

²⁰ Rom. v. 12.

²¹ Article IX.

²² Lam. iv. 1.

Who can reflect on the first beauteous image,
and withhold a tear of sorrow? "How art
"thou fallen, son of the morning"?

When *Judah's* sons, escaped from the house
of their prison, returned to *Sion* to build
again the temple of the LORD, the new foundation
could be laid only by removing the
splendid ruins of the desolated sanctuary; then
came the remembrance of its former glories
fresh into their mind, and "they wept aloud"²³.
And have not we greater cause of sorrow,
when we review the spiritual temple of the
most High laid desolate, and "swept with
"the besom of destruction"? Yea, when we
feel our own concern in it, and find by nature
in our hearts so doleful a contrast to
that original excellence, when man was "po-
"lished after the similitude of a palace"²⁴.
Now alas! desolation sits on the threshold, and
within darkness and ruin are spread abroad.
The glory is departed from us; GOD hath
forsaken us. Guilt spreads its gloomy horrors
over the soul; fear trembles at the consciousness
of certain judgment; the voice of joy is fled,
and sorrow utters her remediless cries. The
fiends of darkness shed their baleful influence
around, and Satan, now become the sovereign
lord,

²³ Ezra iii. 12.

²⁴ Psal. cxliv. 12.

lord, opens wide the gate, to welcome in every unclean and hurtful beast. Pride, malice, rancour, revenge, unbridled appetite, and inordinate concupiscence, with all their train, take up their abode in what was once God's temple: and death, dreadful monster! death before unknown! stalks with his iron mace along the ruined fabric, continuing to beat it wholly down, and lay it low even in the dust. "O! who shall restore our desolations, and build up again these waste places of many generations ²⁵!"

2. The pride of man refusing to submit to the declarations of God, hath been one chief cause of the continuance of this his miserable estate. The account which God hath given, men will not believe; puffed up by their fleshly mind, and vain in their own imaginations, they have presumed to reason against the divine truth instead of submitting to it; and will not allow any such effects to have flowed from one man's disobedience, as those above described: much less that God's wrath and damnation justly lies against the millions of our nature yet unborn ²⁶. For as all the subsequent proceedings of God in the redemption

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²⁵ *Isai. lxi. 4.*²⁶ *Article IX.*

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C

²⁵ Isai. lxi. 4.

²⁶ Article IX.

demption of man, are so intimately connected with this first view; where this is misunderstood or perverted, there the need of the Son of God, the necessity of an atonement, the want of another representative, and all the procedures of divine grace, must be mistaken or denied. From hence have sprung the heresies of *Pelagius*, *Arius*, *Socinus*, and the Deists. Man's fall, as it is recorded in scripture, they will not receive, and, unacquainted with the depth of our misery, see not the necessity of the greatness of our remedy.

3. We cannot but admire the wondrous grace of God, that had compassion upon miserable man; and would not execute upon him the death he had deserved; but with the declaration of his high displeasure opens to him yet a door of hope in the promise of
 "the seed of the woman who should bruise
 "the serpent's head"²⁷. God hath not left us, as he left the angels that sinned to their place of torment; but hath raised up a new salvation for us; hath appointed us another and safer Covenant-Head, the second *Adam*, by whom we may escape from the dreadful ruins of the transgression under the first covenant.

²⁷ Gen. iii. 15.

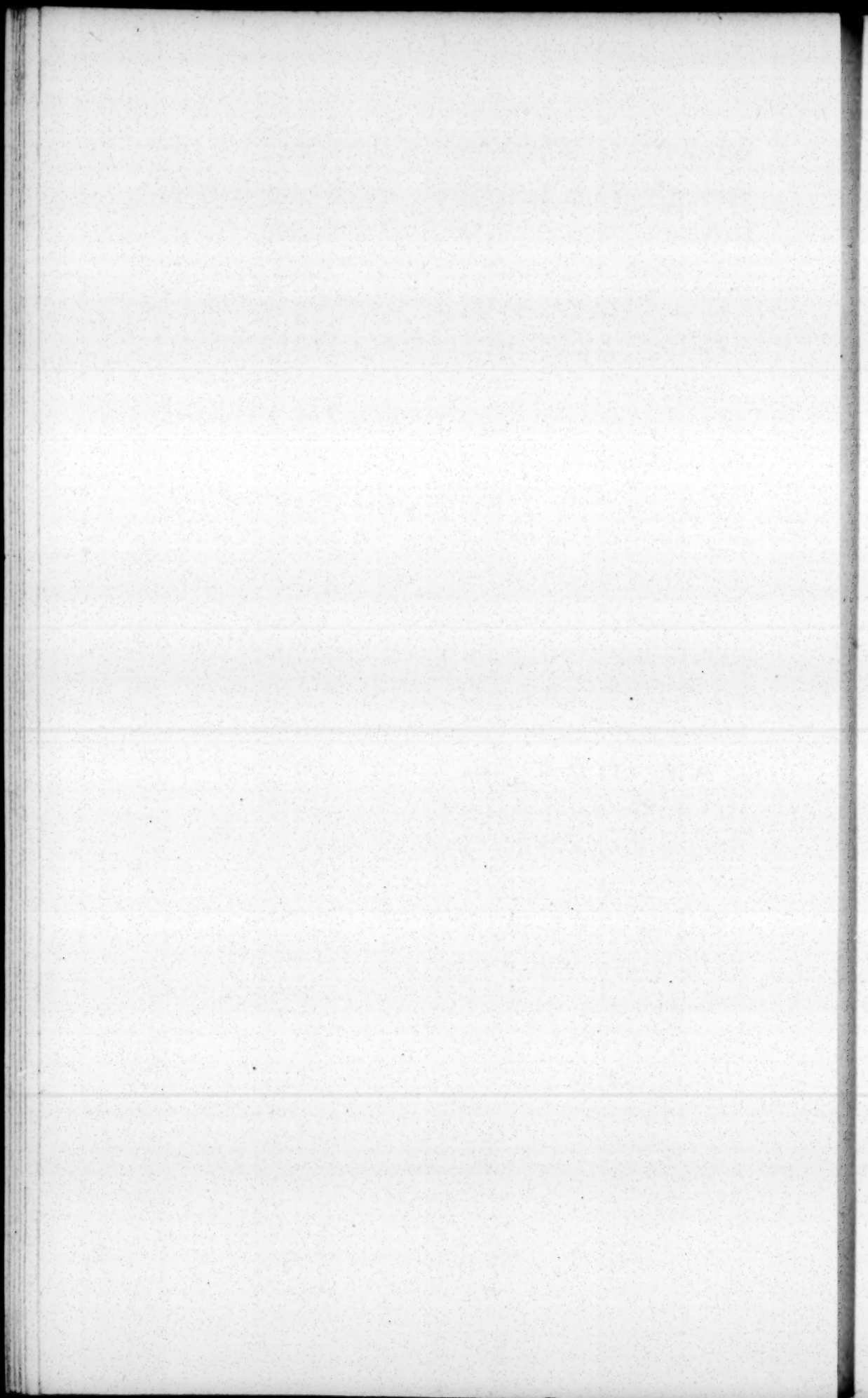
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venant. This seed shall break our bonds from off our neck: he shall deliver us from the power of Satan: he shall ²⁸ raise up our ²⁸ ruined tabernacle which is fallen, and close ²⁸ up the breaches thereof; he shall raise up its ²⁸ ruins, and build it as in the days of old ²⁸. The manner how he shall effect this, by his incarnation, death, intercession, and final redemption of us, shall hereafter be more fully opened. Yet here it becomes us to trace God's love in the first beam of Gospel-grace ²⁹, that darted forth upon fallen *Adam's* soul, and inspired him (for nothing else could have done it) with sentiments of repentance towards a pardoning God. May we see in this first promise the rich grace of our JEHOVAH, and feel a deep sense of the divine compassions and mercies; and as we trace the growing discoveries of these towards man more fully manifested, may they have an increasing and more effectual influence on all our hearts, and engage us to return to Him, from whom we have so greatly departed.

²⁸ Amos ix. 11.

²⁹ Gen. iii. 15.







S E R M O N II.

Of the Corruption of human Nature.



R O M A N S V. 18.

*By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men
to condemnation.*

THE Apostle in these words affirms
T the universality of that guilt under
which the whole human race lieth
at present. He had in the beginning of the Epistle proved by scripture and experience, that " Jews and Gentiles were all
" concluded under sin ¹ "; and consequently exposed to suffer the penalty annexed to every transgression of disobedience. In this and the foregoing verses he traces up sin to its origin, and shews by what means it entred

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into

¹ Gal. iii. 22.

22 *Of the Corruption of human Nature. Sermon. 2.*

into the world, and maintains its dominion; namely, by the first man's fall, and the corruption of nature which thence ensued: which points he labours to fix upon their hearts, both as a ground of deep and abiding humiliation, in the view of their deplorable situation by nature, and as containing the strongest motive to embrace and highly esteem that Gospel of the revelation of the grace of God, wherein ^{ss} life and immortality were ^{ss} again brought to light ^{2 ss}; and a relief provided adequate to the necessity of fallen sinful man.

The knowledge of this our fallen state from scripture, and a clear conviction of its truth from experience, are still the chief means the holy Ghost uses to bring men into the dust of abasement, to plead for the mercy held forth in CHRIST JESUS. ^{ss} He convinceth us ^{ss} of sin, then of righteousness ^{3 ss}. Our disease must be felt before our remedy can be sought. ^{ss} JESUS came to seek and save only ^{ss} that which was lost ⁴. They that are whole ^{ss} need not a physician, but they that are ^{ss} sick ^{5 ss}.

Yet

² 2 Tim. i. 10.

⁴ Luke xix. 10.

³ John xvi. 8.

⁵ Matt. ix. 12.

Yet here the many stumble. Through unacquaintedness with the truth of their real estate, they "think more highly of themselves than they ought to think"⁶; either conceiting that man is still by nature as upright as ever, or at least that such powers and abilities remain with him, that he is of himself capable of pleasing God by the right exercise of his own reason and exertion of his sincere endeavours: or, as some imagine, that though of himself he is insufficient, yet the holy Spirit helping his infirmities, he hath still some moral powers remaining, which if he will exert shall effectually procure his acceptance with God. All which high imaginations, whilst entertained, cannot but puff up the vanity of man, naturally proud, and lead him to depend either more or less on himself, instead of submitting in helpless self-despair to him, "who is mighty to save"; whose office it is "to justify the ungodly", and with deliverance from the punishment, "to save his people from the power of their sins".

For the undeceiving of such as these; for the information of such as desire to know the
C 4
truth;

⁶ Rom. xii. 3.

24 *Of the Corruption of human Nature. Serm. 2.*

truth; for the confirmation of the faith of the sincere, and for the greater humiliation of all, I shall endeavour at this time to prove it a *Fact*,

That man is fallen, *wholly* fallen from God.

May the Spirit of God assist me with clearness of argument, and send conviction of the truth to every man's conscience, giving you
" an understanding to know the Scriptures "
and yourselves.

I am to prove to you that man is a fallen creature; yea, wholly departed from God. And here I shall make use of two chief arguments, namely, the testimony of the *scriptures* and universal *experience*; each of which, I trust, will convince those who reverence the authority of God, and coolly examine the evidence, that our state is truly deplorable and corrupted. O! that it may lead every soul of us to him, " who alone is able to save " to the uttermost, all who come unto God " by him ⁷ ".

1st, The testimony of the *scriptures*. And in a point of such weight and importance,
you

⁷ Heb. vii, 25.

you may be sure to meet with the strongest assertions of it. I will select a few of the principal, as they lie in their order, and open their contents that we may feel their force.

That God made man after his own image you have heard; an image to have been perpetuated to his posterity, had he continued in obedience. He fell: God's image was effaced. The curse hath succeeded. When *Adam* therefore begat a son, the holy Ghost peculiarly notes, that it was "in his own likeness"^s, not the likeness of God, in which originally he gloried, but of his fallen nature: a pregnant evidence of which presently ensued, when brother imbrued his hands in brother's blood, soon after, if not in the very act of sacrificing, the appointed means of acknowledging their guilt, and the season when they were peculiarly called upon to be humbled for and repent of it.

From such an early specimen of man's nature, we may the less wonder at the following relation. When "God saw the earth
" filled with violence, and that the wicked-
" ness of man was great in the earth, for
" every

^s Gen. v. 3.

26 *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* Serm. 2.

"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"⁹. Such is his description, "who knew what was in man". The heart of man was then *evil*; yea every thought of it; yea every imagination, before the thought is framed or desire perfected: it was evil and *only evil*, not the least mixture of spiritual goodness remaining; nor was any moment excepted, evil continually flowed, as the stream from the fountain.

But it may be objected, the evil mentioned here was not *natural* but *acquired*; that men were not born *wicked*, but made themselves so. This point then let the next declaration of God determine. Does he not say to *Noah* after the flood, in the view of generations yet unborn, that he "will not again curse the ground for man's sake", though the same provocation would again and must for ever exist, "because the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth"¹⁰? Here it is evident that evil is charged upon the heart of man as its genuine produce. No reference is there in these words to the persons then in being, or the influence of their or any future examples or instructions; but it is mentioned

⁹ Gen. vi. 5, 11.

¹⁰ Gen. viii. 21.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 27

mentioned as arising simply from the corruption of nature.

In consequence of this the rising generation, influenced by the same cause as their forefathers, turned every man quickly to their ways; so that in the days of *Abraham* idolatry reigned universally.

Well then may we join holy *Job* in asking, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one"¹¹: and subscribe the Psalmist's confession, "Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive me"¹². The nature is in fault: the fountain is marred at its head, and the streams must flow polluted.

As we advance we have increasing proofs of the universality of this corruption. The holy Ghost by the mouth of *David* assures us, that when "the LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God; Lo! they were all gone out of the way, they were altogether become abominable, there was none that did good,

¹¹ Job xiv. 4.

¹² Psal. li. 5.

28 *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* Sermon. 2.

"good, no not one"¹³. And what was revealed to the father, was by the same Spirit manifested to the son; for this, among the first evils under the sun, the Preacher found, and indeed the origin of all the rest: "That the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead"¹⁴. The heart is a fountain full of evil; and all the time men live upon the earth, this hereditary madness shews itself, till death closes the scene, and becomes at once its cure and its punishment.

Such apprehensions the holy Prophets had also of the state and temper of man: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it"¹⁵? It is a great deep of corruption: when we have fathomed it with the longest line of observation, and found it to be indeed *desperately wicked*, still "the half is not told us". Who can know the fulness of evil, which dwells in an apostate nature?

Our blessed LORD therefore, when himself upon earth, among other divine lessons he pointed

¹³ Psal. xiv. 2.

¹⁴ Eccles. ix. 3.

¹⁵ Jer. xvii. 9.

Serm.2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 29

pointed out what peculiarly *defileth the man*, declares it arises from his heart: " Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies; these come from within ¹⁶ ". There is the seat of sin where Satan dwelleth: there the conceptions of it are formed, and thence they flow, as from the subterraneous fire proceed the earthquake, the sulphurous exhalation, and the burning lava.

And this is the necessary effect of being born into the world. For " whatever is born of the flesh, is flesh ¹⁷ ". The nature is called wholly *flesh*, because it is wholly void of the Spirit, and become enslaved to fleshly lusts and appetites, and hath by its fall sunk almost into the beast.

Our nature thus declared to be *evil*, we must expect to hear it condemned; and so it is written, " by nature children of wrath ¹⁸ ": wrath follows sin as closely as the shadow does the body: where sin is, there wrath will be; and where wrath is, there we may be always assured sin hath been.

From

¹⁶ Matt. xv. 19.

¹⁷ John iii. 6.

¹⁸ Ephes. ii. 3.

From all these, and many the like testimonies which might be adduced, and indeed from the intire system of divine revelation, where this is implied throughout all the transactions and methods taken for our recovery, I presume it will incontestably appear, that man is at present a fallen, corrupted creature, wholly defiled in his nature, and in consequence become lothsome and hateful in the eyes of divine purity. Such was the conclusion our pious Reformers drew from these views of scripture in the IXth Article, “Original sin standeth not (as the “*Pelagians* do vainly talk) in the following “of *Adam*, but is the fault and corruption “of the nature of every man that naturally “is engendred of the offspring of *Adam*, “whereby man is *very far* * gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh always lusteth contrary to the spirit; and “therefore in every person born into this “world it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.”

2dly, That

* The original, *quam longissime*, is much stronger than our translation, *very far*.

2dly, That the fact is really so, *experience* abundantly confirms. The truth is certain, though it be denied; but it is immediately confessed, when the heart begins to be really enlightened to know itself. The ignorance of the blind, or their disputing against the light, prevents not the shining of the sun, nor can persuade us that at mid-day there is darkness.

1. The experience of all ages to the present attests the corruption which God's word reveals. It was not only in the first ages of the world, that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth"; the complaints of every succeeding age shew the same cause operating uniformly throughout. Consult the Heathens; they observed it, confessed it, lamented it, in theory at least, and talked of precepts, though impotent to restrain the power of corruption. Consult the Scriptures; they describe all the nations, and even the chosen people of God "as a seed of evil-doers"¹⁸; and their Prophets rising up continually reproached them for their ungodliness. The account Saint Paul¹⁹ gives of the Jews and Gentiles,

¹⁸ Isai. i. 4.

¹⁹ Rom. i. and ii Chapters.

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Gentiles, learned and unlearned alike, shews the deplorable and universal deluge of sin. And what succeeding times have mended the account? Surely not our own. Cast your eyes round, and read man's present apostasy, written as with a sun-beam: see how iniquity lifts up its hydra-head and hisses on every side. "By swearing, and lying, and killing, "and stealing, and committing adultery," says the Prophet, "they break out, and blood "toucheth blood"²⁰". What a scene of blackness and guilt appears to the observant eye? The lying Prophets indeed "see visions of "peace"; boast of man's moral rectitude; palliate the flagrant evils they cannot deny; and seek to hide themselves and others from the light, *speaking peace, peace*, when it is so evident, as *Jehu* said, "What peace, when "our iniquities and our whoredoms are so "many"²¹?"

Where can you look, without beholding the broken tables of the covenant trod under foot? whilst one part of mankind are plunged in the grosser crimes of perjury, drunkenness, all manner of lewdness, sabbath-breaking, profaneness and disobedience; the other more decently

²⁰ Hosea iv. 2.

²¹ 2 Kings ix. 22.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 33

decently corrupt themselves and forget God ; in Mammon's idol service ; in Honour's empty pageantry ; in Pleasure's thoughtless throng. *The world, the world* is the universal cry, where envy, malice, disappointment, covetousness, ambition, successively torment the fortunate and the unsuccessful. The learned and the unlearned, the high and low, the rich and poor, have their separate walk, concurring all in this, " to worship and serve " the creature more than the Creator ²² ". But these things men hate to see or hear of, though truths so flagrant ; and, fixed on their own deceivings, will neither attend to their danger, nor be restrained. Hence so ineffectual have been all the means which God or man hath used. Doth God raise up servants to remonstrate against iniquity ? They hate and persecute them. Like their fathers that " killed the Prophets, and stoned them " which were sent unto them ²³ ". They smite them " with the words of the tongue ", and would with the edge of the sword. " All the " day long therefore have we stretched forth " our hands to a disobedient and gainsaying " people ²⁴ ". They hate to be reformed, and

D

" cast

²² Rom. i. 25.

²³ Matt. xxiii. 37.

²⁴ Rom. x. 21.

34 *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* Serm. 2.

" cast God's word behind their back ²⁵". Nor do they regard men much more than God. In general how ineffectual are all the restraints of human laws? How evaded or broken through? What would men say, if only the laws against sabbath-breaking, drunkenness and lewdness, were actually put in execution? But if these things are so, a sad demonstration arises of man's deep corruption. Facts like these prove that his neck is *an iron sinew*, that he determines to go on in the frowardness of his heart, " an evil heart of unbelief, " departing from the living God ²⁶".

2. Another confirmation of this truth may be drawn from observation on the tempers of children, even before they have reached any years of reflexion. It will be found universally true, that " folly (that is sin) is bound " up in the heart of a child ²⁷". And those who would be convinced of the corruption of our nature, need only observe the babe in the nurse's arms. Those perverse passions which afterwards in life break forth and fill our houses with violence, appear then in embryo.

²⁵ Psal. l. 17.

²⁶ Heb. iii. 12.

²⁷ Prov. xxii. 15.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 35

embrio. What anger may you remark in their little breasts when crossed or contradicted? What self-will and obstinacy do they shew under correction? What envy at favours done to others? And scarce have they begun to speak, but they begin to lie, and disingenuously and artfully, like *Adam*, seek to conceal their transgressions. So true it is, that "ungodly man is froward, even from his mother's womb; as soon as he is born he goes astray, and speaks lies"²⁸. Nor can this be ascribed to the influence of education, or laid to the fault of bad examples before them. It is the case with those who are the most carefully educated; and the most pious parent with grief beholds the seeds of corruption springing up continually in this their native soil, notwithstanding his pains by the rod of correction and by instruction to root them up.

And though some shew stronger dispositions to sin than others, and a milder constitution appears from the cradle in a few; yet none are excepted from the above symptoms of corruption, though, like different

D 2

animals

²⁸ P^sal. lviii. 3.

36 *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* Sermon. 2.

animals of the same savage species, some exceed others in ferocity. Nor can this be accounted for on any other principles than those the scriptures open to us: For what could be more impious, nay blasphemous, than to suppose that we came such out of our Maker's hands as we now evidently are?

3. I add, as a corroborative proof to the foregoing remarks, the *miseries* which appear in the world. That "man is now born to sorrow and trouble, as the sparks fly upward"²⁹, cannot be denied. We hear on every side the complainings of the afflicted, the murmurings of the discontented, the repinings of the poor, the vexations of the disappointed, the cries of the sick, and the groans of the dying. What is the world but a *Bochim*, a place of weeping? Whilst sorrow cometh upon sorrow faster than *Job's* messengers of evil. And who are exempted from the general lot? Doth not every living soul feel within the forebodings of approaching dissolution, the decays of age, the wastes of time, and know that he is, even in the midst of life, hastning to the dust, to the grave, the heritage of the sinner? Now can it be thought, that the God
" whose

²⁹ Job v. 7.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 37

“ whose mercy is over all his works ³⁰, who
“ never willingly afflicts the children of
“ men ³¹”, can it be imagined that the God
“ whose name and nature is love ³²”, would
thus unprovoked lift up the scourge, and
with scorpions chastise us? That be far from
him: “ He is righteous in all his ways, and
“ just in all his judgments ³³”. He giveth us
less, but never more than our iniquities de-
serve. If it be said, True; but we have *ac-*
tually sinned, and are plagued for our *own* of-
fences. I say, that will not account for the
scene we have been describing; for we see all
the like evils, and Death the greatest of them,
“ pass upon those who have not sinned after
“ the similitude of *Adam's* transgression ³⁴”.
Stand by the cradle, and see that child of man
scarce started from the womb; hear its dole-
ful moans, see it convulsed and agonizing
with pain; covered with loathsome ulcers, and
pining, laid in its coffin; what can this mean?
Is there no preceding cause, no meritorious
ground for this heavy chastisement? To sup-
pose it, would be making the most High, like
the idol *Moloch*, pleased with dying infants
cries.

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³⁰ Psa. cxlv. 9.

³¹ Lam. iii. 33.

³² 1 John iv. 8.

³³ Psa. cxlv. 17.

³⁴ Rom. v. 14.

38 *Of the Corruption of human Nature. Serm. 2.*
cries. But here the mystery is solved: that babe, scarce a span long, is a corrupted creature: it hath a nature which is enmity against God: it possesseth every abomination, not indeed in their maturity, but which have already taken root " to bring forth fruit unto death ". And thus we shall no longer question God's righteousness in punishing, Death being universally " the wages of sin ³⁵ ".
of our own

4. The acknowledgments of the best of men have borne a strong testimony to this great truth, that man is a corrupted creature. Whoever reads the scripture with an attentive eye, will necessarily observe the ancient worthies full of their confessions of guilt and corruption. *David, Job, St Paul*, high as their advancements were, " groaned under this " evil, being burdened. A body of death " hung about them; a nature departed from God, and ready continually to hurry them down its stream into the dead sea of perdition. It was only by wrestling, striving, labouring, and by the grace of God beating down this body of sin, that they were enabled to stand: so true it is that " the righteous " scarcely are saved "; arising from the difficulty

³⁵ Rom. vi. 23.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 39

ficulty of subduing this strong bent of our fallen nature. And the experience of God's servants hath and doth continue to confirm it. For who of them doth not feel "a law" in his members warring against the law of "his mind"³⁶ ? Who is not often forced to say, "when I would do good, evil is present with me"³⁷ ? Yea, do they not all go mourning to their graves under this burden, and long especially to "be absent from the body", that they may be delivered wholly from the bondage of corruption which now presseth down the soul?

From what hath been said, who can any longer doubt of the universal corruption of our nature? Who will have the hardiness to say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"³⁸ ?

It remains therefore only to improve what hath been spoken.

First, For our deeper humiliation before God. Though we are never so deeply convinced of this or that sin, if we see the fact

D 4 only,

³⁶ Rom. vii. 23.

³⁷ Rom. vii. 21.

³⁸ Prov. xx. 9.

40 *Of the Corruption of human Nature. Sermon. 2.*

only, the impression of guilt will be but partial, and though terrifying, not truly humbling and emptying us of our self-sufficiency. If we would see sin in its true malignity, we must ascend from the act to the temper; from the temper to the nature. And what can so entirely confound our pride as this view we have taken of ourselves? Not merely corrupt in practice but in principle; not sinners by habit only, but sinners in nature. Here sin appears *exceeding sinful*³⁹; confounds us in the dust, silences every plea, and brings the soul before the throne of grace, with the true sensibility implied in that penitent confession, which God himself hath put into our mouth, *Unclean, unclean*⁴⁰. A person thus convinced, knows himself to be one mass of corruption; that he never was possessed of one good temper, nor performed or could perform a single act pleasing to God. For what but uncleanness can proceed from the unclean? And hence he is entirely cut off from help and hope in himself, and led simply and fully to make use of that help which the gospel sets before him in Jesus, who ³⁹ came to ³⁹ deliver us from the bondage of corruption³⁹, by the efficacy of his blood, and the power of his

³⁹ Rom. vii. 13.

⁴⁰ Levit. xiii. 45.

Serm. 2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 41

his Spirit. The reason why so many who are awakened in a measure to a sense of sin continue still in bondage, and fruitlessly are labouring to mend *themselves*, is this, that they are not truly humbled: they are not acquainted with the depth and universality of the corruption which the fall hath brought upon them; nor consequently with the absolute impossibility of doing any thing pleasing to GOD, till he himself *justifies* their persons as *ungodly*, and *sanctifies* their nature as *unholy*.

Secondly, What a dreadful thing is sin! one sin hath introduced all this misery into the world; and yet we are daily trifling with it as a *little thing*. Instead of regarding it as the evil and bitter thing it is, with what unconcern do we pass it by in ourselves and others? And here again have we not a strong additional proof of the reality of our fall, in this deep insensibility to it, whilst we behold its consequences so tremendously fatal? O did we but consider how GOD hates sin; did we but attend to the present marks of the divine displeasure against it; or could we be persuaded really to believe "the wrath to come"! surely there is not one of us, but
from

42 *Of the Corruption of human Nature. Serm. 2.*

from the bottom of his heart must tremble. As the " earthquake which shook the prison⁴¹ ", and brought the trembling Jailer on his knees, this view of sin's dreadful evil, and the consciousness how deeply we lie under it, would shake the inmost powers of the soul, and lay us low before the footstool of mercy, " if yet the iniquity of our hearts might be forgiven us ". In how dangerous a situation then and drawing on fast to eternal ruin must that soul be, who hath never yet groaned under the burden of sin, nor felt the least of its evil and bitterness, nor cried to him who " hath appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself⁴² " ?

Thirdly, What a welcome message doth the gospel bring to those who are truly sensible of their fallen state. We cannot in such case hear with cold unconcern, that " the Lamb of GOD taketh away the sin of the world⁴³ "; we shall not pass by, and look upon his sorrows unmoved, when " the LORD laid upon him the iniquities of us all⁴⁴ ". We shall no longer dispute against the dispensations of GOD, nor proudly ask, " How can these things

⁴¹ Acts xvi. 26.

⁴² Heb. ix. 26.

⁴³ John i. 29.

⁴⁴ Isai. liii. 6.

Serm.2. *Of the Corruption of human Nature.* 43

" things be " ? but, humbly bowing before the gracious throne, shall believe, admire, and adore. We shall then see that there is elsewhere neither help nor hope ; here all help, all hope revealed to us. We all misery, God all mercy ; we all corruption, CHRIST all perfection ; we all guilt, he all pardon ; we all weakness, he all power ; we wholly lost in sin, he " able to save to the uttermost ", in virtue of the sufferings of his human nature, and the dignity of the divine. O that each soul of us really felt our disease ! How ready then should we be to submit to the divine Physician, and lay our sinful corrupted souls at his feet ? Happy the man that thus comes to him in all his native wretchedness, he never sent one such " poor sinner empty " away. He healeth all our infirmities, " and delivereth the souls appointed unto " Death ⁴⁵ " .

⁴⁵ Psal. ciii. 3.—cii. 20.



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S E R M O N III*.

The Deceitfulness and Corruption of the Heart.



JEREMIAH XVII. 9.

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and
desperately wicked, who can know it?*



O know ourselves, the Philosophers reckoned the pinnacle of wisdom: and however mistaken in the means proposed for that end, they were right in the assertion; no knowledge being more necessary for us than this, nor any perhaps

* The three following Sermons, as to their substance, were preached about two years ago; since which there hath appeared a Treatise on SELF-KNOWLEDGE † by that excellent man of God Mr Walker of Truro. There will often be found a coincidence of thought between us, which will not be wondered at when it is known, that under his ministry and instructions the writer of these Discourses was several years ago formed for the service of the sanctuary. He begs his readers to procure that little Treatise of Mr Walker's, where he will find many new hints on the subject here treated of; and he cannot but recommend his other works already published, and now in the Press, as most worthy of a serious perusal.

† Sold by J. and W. Oliver, in Bartholemew-Close, pr. 4d.

46 *The Deceitfulness and Corruption* Serm. 3.

haps so difficult to be attained. None more *necessary*, because thereon stands, in the Christian plan, all that superstructure of *newness* of life, the foundation of which is laid in deep humility, arising from the real knowledge of ourselves as *fallen creatures*. None so *difficult* to be obtained, because the subject of this knowledge is so extensive, and self-love and self-deceit so misrepresent the facts; that, as by the art of a cunning painter, the real deformity of the figure is concealed, and we admire the false and flattering portrait as if it was the true.

It shall be my endeavour therefore to open to you the truth of our state, and lead you into the discovery of your own hearts. But herein I must beg you will not be offended to see yourselves in a faithful mirror, the Word of God; nor start back from the sight of our natural deformity, stripped of that mask which usually conceals the monster. I cannot flatter: God forbids it. His Word declares, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?"

There are indeed, who pretend to give a more favourable view of things; who talk of
the

the dignity of man's nature, its noble faculties, its self-taught perceptions of universal right and wrong; and if not bearing the first strong out-lines of Virtue from the womb, at least represent it as a fair sheet, prepared of itself to receive the genuine impressions of whatever is fit, and wise, and good. I have already said enough to confute this infidel representation; but trust, in the progress of this Discourse, more clearly to reveal the truth as it is to every man's heart, who will observe what passes within him: when it will be found, that the only dignity we can boast of is our unhumbléd pride; our native wisdom, the *φρονημα σαρκος*, which is "enmity against God"; and our fair traces of Virtue, the strong lines of a spirit which is "earthly, sensual, devilish".

We are now entering an unbounded field: for "who can understand his errors" ² "or who knoweth the deep things of a man, save *He* only, "before whom all things are naked" and open"? Let it not be thought, therefore, that the following is a full or exact representation of man's heart. It must be always said here, as the *Queen of Sheba* said to *Solomon*,

¹ James iii. 15.² Psal. xix. 12.

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Solomon, "The half is not told us"³: yet, so far as it goes, it will, I trust, be found faithful; and be at least a clue for those who desire to see themselves, to lead them into the dark labyrinth within; and they may lengthen it as they advance, by closer and more intimate observations on themselves and mankind.

I. The radical evil seems to be *Unbelief*, from whose fruitful stock the other corrupt tempers spring. "Ye shall not surely die"⁴, found admission into the first man's heart, in opposition to the divine denunciation, and emboldned him to eat. This spirit of Infidelity is naturally rooted in the mind of every child of *Adam*, scarcely to be eradicated by the clearest evidence of scripture truths; such "fools and slow of heart are we to believe," "what the scriptures have spoken"⁵! The name Infidel hath been in the Christian world stamped with infamy; therefore the *profession* of Infidelity is made by few, yet the fact is universal. And the truth of it a few observations will confirm: intimating, by the way, that the first work of the Spirit of God upon the heart of man is this very thing, "conviction of unbelief", and therefore where
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³ 1 Kings x. 7.

⁴ Gen. iii. 4.

⁵ Luke xxiv. 25.

no such conviction has been made, such a soul continues as yet *dead* in a state of nature and sin.

That in the heathen world the hopes of impunity, or disbelief of punishment, were at the bottom of all mens transgressions, is a truth which, I presume, will be readily admitted.

How else, in opposition to so many natural forebodings and traditionary notices, that "they who do such things are worthy of death", could they make themselves so easy under, and talk so gaily of their Vices, as their histories and other writings evidently shew they did. Now they could be supposed to act thus only on this principle, that these notices and forebodings had no real foundation, or that some how or other there was a reserve of mercy: either that the gods took no notice of human actions at all (which was the affirmation of many, and the hope of more) or that they would overlook the little escapes of human frailty. Thus their unbelief operated. But I rather speak of *ourselves*, who profess to believe the revealed truths of the Scriptures.

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Who of us really and heartily submits to the divine declarations? We admit them in words, in works we deny them. You hear God's determinations to punish sin with *death eternal*⁶, yea *every sin*⁷: Yet who believes them? did we really assent to and duly revere God's word, how would every sin affect us? But now what is the universal hope and language? "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imaginations of my heart"⁸. To establish this persuasion we too, as the heathens did, give way to fallacious reasonings; either my transgressions are venial, and they will be overlooked; at least, they will not deserve so heavy a scourge as "the worm which dieth not, and the fire which is not quenched"⁹. But what is this fire which is not quenched? It cannot be actual burning; for how can one lie in everlasting burnings unconsumed? And how know I, but the whole may be a delusion; and that "man dieth as the beast, and is no more"¹⁰. Yea sometimes it advanceth farther, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"¹⁰. As it is our interest as finners that there should

⁶ Rom. vi. 23.⁷ Gal. iii. 10.⁸ Deut. xxix. 19.⁹ Mark ix. 44.¹⁰ Psa. xiv. 1.

should be none ; many doubts about it are in more hearts than mention them. Such are some of the workings of *Unbelief* ; a man must be a great stranger to himself that hath not found their influence.

Again, with regard to the other revealed truths of God's Word, how deep-rooted are our objections to them ? *Nicodemus* was not singular, when to our blessed LORD's declarations he answered, " How can these things " be " " ? Some, and the many indeed, shew so little regard to the word of GOD, that they cannot be so well said to doubt the contents as not to understand them ; and are rather ignorant of the truths than unbelieving. But no sooner does any man begin to examine, than he will find this " root of bitterness " springing up in his heart ".

The Revelation of GOD, as subsisting in Unity of Essence and Trinity of Persons ; the Divinity, Person and Character of the REDEEMER ; his undertakings and the issue of them ; the necessity and nature of the new birth unto righteousness ; and the whole work of God's Spirit on the heart: these and

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the like truths, as related in the Scriptures, will often be objected to. ^{ss} The natural man ^{ss} receiveth not the things that be of the Spirit ^{ss} of GOD; for they are foolishness to him: ^{ss} neither can he know them, because they ^{ss} are spiritually discerned ^{12 ss}. Hence all the Heresies and Schisms which have divided the church of GOD: hence all the Doubts and Distresses that have disturbed the hearts of the sincere; as well as the fixed rejection of the Gospel, which possesses the mind of the avowed Infidel. Our *nature* is in fault.

And by the way, this shews the folly of that method of metaphysical disquisition, with which the celebrated ^{ss} disputers of this ^{ss} world ^{ss} have led the crusade, and joined in embattled squadrons against the Infidels. When after all the boasted triumphs of reason, we see Infidelity maintain its ground as firm as ever: though the outworks seem to have been carried, the body of the place remains unhurt; thither they have retired, and are still as far from a surrender as ever. It is the heart not the head only which must be attacked. Infidelity is too much our nature to fall before the untempered sword of
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¹² 1 Cor. ii. 14.

fallen man's Reason, it can only be subdued by "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD"¹³.

II. Pride hath set up its throne in man's nature. "Ye shall be as gods"¹⁴, was one grand bait the devil proposed to man. And since that day this unhallowed temper is rooted deep in the heart. Its actings are various, according to the object on which it fixes, or by which it is excited. Let us take a cursory view of some few instances of it.

(1.) Pride shews itself on our *Wisdom*; for "vain man would be wise"¹⁵: an insatiable thirst after *Knowledge* is the effect of connecting with such attainments ideas of superior excellence. Hence emulation and the pride of surpassing others, is the sinful motive usually urged upon the students of science to excite industry; that, like coursers straining for the goal, they may each carry off from their competitors the envied prize. An extensive Knowledge can be the lot of few, because leisure or abilities are wanting: but the affectation of appearing wise, at least

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wiser

¹³ Ephes. vi. 17.¹⁴ Gen. iii. 5.¹⁵ Job xi. 12.

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wiser than we are, is general. Who in conversation, whatever be the subject, is not desirous of appearing *knowing*? whether it be Divinity, Politics, Science, or any other profession? How readily, and even unasked, do we say what we know upon it, drop hints of deeper views of the subject than we discover; and where ignorant, artfully seek that our ignorance may be concealed? Why do you expect a deference to your judgment? Why so loth to appear mistaken in a proposition or opinion you have advanced? Why so little deference to the opinion of others, wiser, older, and more godly men? Why "so swift" to speak, so slow to hear¹⁶? Why pleased to have your parts admired, or your genius complimented? Why hurt when contemned as a person of mean understanding, especially in your profession; or an Author of no learning? Come not these from pride of heart?

(2.) Pride on *natural*, is as common as on *mental* endowments. Did you ever see a Beauty without vanity? And where fine features are wanting, the elegance of form supplies the fuel? Are not these the envy of one
sex

¹⁶ James i. 19.

sex and the idol of the other? Hence the secret pleasure of being taken notice of, and the deep chagrin of being neglected; the arts practised to attract the one, and avoid the other; the easiness of credit given to flattery, and the affectation even to gray hairs of appearing young, genteel or handsome.

Nor is this temper less obvious amongst men; though womanish Beauty would be counted an effeminacy, yet to be manly agreeable, genteel in person, strong in body, and of a fine address, is just as much coveted after by one sex, as beauty is by the other; is the ground of the same pride when possessed or commended for it, and of the same discontent if unpossessed or unnoticed.

Dress comes in, in *both* sexes, as an auxiliary to nature and to pride. The Fashion is consulted: be it expensive or indecent or dangerous, pride must be gratified, though at the loss of health and wealth and modesty. And what a pleasure to be well dressed? What a satisfaction when we first appear in any thing new and in taste? What a jealousy of a finer dressed figure than our own; and what an ambition to excel? Hence not only

the contention among equals, but the confusion of ranks and station : and the difficulty sometimes to distinguish the Master from his Servant, or the Chambermaid from her Mistress.

(3.) The gifts of Providence, however adventitious, afford also an abundant occasion for pride. *Honour* is the food of ambition. We all aspire to be *something great*, and every step of advancement fills us with a secret delight and higher apprehension of our own importance. Whoever will reflect on his heart, when he first set out in life, will remember those castles, which frequent disappointments may have now perhaps begun to convince him had their basis only in airy pride.

Yet these do not intirely undeceive us. Though our hopes are more confined, they still soar ; and secret discontent with what we are, urges us to pursue what we would be. We regard whatever is bestowed on us as less than we deserve ; and whilst we look forward with greater eagerness from every summit gained, we look back with conscious satisfaction on those whom we have left behind.

hind. Whoever makes observation on the world, will see this verified in every profession; for ambition is not confined to dignity. The meanest officer in a corporation is affected in the same way as the minister next the throne; and he must be a great stranger to himself who hath not felt the glow which recent honour brings.

Riches also give the like gratification, as affording us an opportunity of distinction. And the show of affluence is often made, even where want at home must support the finery abroad: For to be thought indigent is extremely mortifying. The gilt equipage, the laced livery, and the multitude of useless attendants, make a figure in the world. The elegant Villa calls forth the same spirit from the heart which *Nebuchadnezzar* felt when he said, "This is great *Babylon*, that I have built for the house of my kingdom"¹⁷. And when we are affecting to overlook these things, we do it that they may be admired, and are secretly delighted with the commendation of them. The *skew* of Vanity appears also alike in every inferior station, all vie with their neighbours, and pique themselves

¹⁷ Dan. iv. 30.

selves on their little distinctions. The Lady that rides not in her chariot, is proud to be followed by her Footman. And the satisfaction the lower people take in going on a party of pleasure on a *Sunday*, and spending so much money at a Wake, indulges the same temper as the wealthier do by keeping so many country-houses.

Money also itself ministers to pride, and so adds a new gratification to covetousness. Is there pride in that man yonder, whose figure is so very mean, and dress so fordid, complaining of the hardness of the times and the scarcity of money? Could you know the pleasure that man feels when he hears it whispered, "He is a wealthy man; no man commands so much cash;" you would be no longer at a loss to determine. His pride is as much flattered by *that*, as the other man who rides by in gold and grandeur is by his *Shew*, supported, it may be, by mortgage-money out of this rich miser's purse.

Family also is another fund of vanity, the foolishness of all pride, yet how general? Those of high birth look down on their inferiors as a different race of beings. As you descend

descend the distinction is still observed, and connexions and relations, however distant, give them an air of quality above their equals in station. The Gentleman regards the Vulgar with a disdainful contempt, as sprung from the dust. And even in the Parish Work-house the contest for family will be maintained by the decayed Tradesman's orphans, against the children of those of baser original.

Our worldly *Character* also in its various references continually leads us to seek "the
"praise of men more than of God"¹⁸. Pride would be notable; and what will it not do to maintain, increase, or recover any measure of esteem? What a vexation and uneasiness do we find at the loss of this idol? and how unwilling are we to believe those declarations of God, "that the friendship of the world is
"enmity with God; and that if any man
"will be the friend of the world, he must
"be the enemy of God"¹⁹. Hence all that dislike to the cross, and the constant labour of reconciling the inconsistent services of God and *Mammon*. Hence that inordinate desire to please men: Hence, especially, the
cowardice

¹⁸ John xii. 43.¹⁹ James iv. 4.

cowardice of Ministers, and the compliances of many with the corrupt taste of the times, who secretly condemn the things they in practice allow. Reputation is at stake, and Conscience must conform a little.

Thus Pride operates.

I have reserved,

IV. Its most formidable appearance as the last; and that is, its insinuations where Religion is concerned. *Spiritual pride* appears in a high conceit of our own excellence above other men; a desire of appearing more holy than we are, an exterior appearance of devotion, and scrupulous attendance on the ordinances of worship, without humility and the love of God in the heart.

In the duties of *Devotion*, either in or after the exercise, this will appear. Have you never found your heart, when you have been at what you call your Prayers, pleased with yourself, as having performed some work meritorious? Are you not led to compare yourself with others, who do not frequent the Church so often, and say, "Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou?" You pray,
and

and communicate, and give alms, and mind your duty? Are you never ^{ss} thanking God ^{ss} you are not as other men ^{20 ss}? These are the symptoms of pharisaic pride. Where this is discovered and disclaimed, a more refined self-exaltation appears in the pleasure we take in a lively frame of mind, when after the exercise of Prayer or Preaching or Exhortation, we hear that whisper, "Well done," within us; or when we have been engaged in these exercises, especially before others, and fancy we have not acquitted ourselves with that propriety, fulness and excellence we proposed to ourselves, we grow uneasy and dissatisfied. Pride working just as strongly in our dissatisfaction as in our self-applause.

But pride on *Duties* is still increased by pride on our *Graces*. The very fruits of God's Spirit corruption would pervert: our meekness under provocation affords a handle for self-approbation. Our zeal for God is made subservient to our own glory. Yea our very humility shall sometimes cater for our pride, our abasements shall exalt us, our confessions of unworthiness make us think highly of ourselves, and our very condescensions be
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²⁰ Luke xviii. 11.

the footstool on which vanity would raise itself. Well may we say of our heart, "Who can know it?"

As the effect of the above, *Hypocrisy* creeps in. "Deceitful above all things is the heart". Deceitful respecting others: willing they should "think more highly of you than they ought to think". Hence that desire of appearing an experimental Christian; seeming to know and feel more than you have known or felt. The secret satisfaction of having it whispered "What a gracious soul? How deeply acquainted with the truth?" especially if you are young; and therefore it should be esteemed more uncommon. This is *spiritual Hypocrisy*. And you may deceive *yourself* as well as others. If you have learned to talk, you may conceit you have possession of the thing, and that your prayers are as real as your expressions are ready: easily persuading yourself, that the opinion others have of you hath foundation, and that you are indeed what they think you to be. Hence the delusions that too many fall into, "vainly puffed up, and taken in the snare of the devil".

I must

I must rest here for this time, to conclude with a few observations.

1. How deplorable is their ignorance who boast of the goodness of their hearts, and fancy themselves free from all the workings of Pride! Can there be a stronger evidence, that "the god of this world hath blinded" their eyes²¹? Yet how many put in pretensions to such goodness of heart, and live and die in the vanity of their fallen mind; unacquainted with their real state; unperceived the bondsmen of corruption, and blindly led to ruin, whilst they promise themselves the surest place in the kingdom of heaven.

2. If God hath made any discovery to us of these things, it should stir us up to a more diligent search and inquiry into ourselves: "We know nothing yet as we ought" to know²². The deepest read in self-knowledge have much of their hearts unseen: as *Ezekiel*, the farther he went "into the" chambers of imagery²³, the more he saw
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²¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

²² 1 Cor. viii. 2.

²³ Ezek. viii. 12, 15.

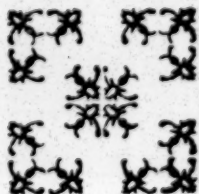
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of abominations: I may venture to say the same of our fallen nature, the more we know of it, the more evil we shall know of it; and the less we shall like it. A thousand perversenesses are still overlooked; many deceptions undiscovered; and hidden principles of Pride will be found lurking, where we least of all suspected them. It should teach us therefore to examine ourselves narrowly, and pray earnestly to Him who alone can "open our hearts", and make us "understand our errors". We shall have need to take up the Psalmist's cry, "Search me, O LORD, and see the ground of my heart; try me, and examine my ways; and look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" ²⁴.

3. The discovery of their deep corruption should not discourage those who feel the burden of it. It is our highest interest to know the truth of our state, and the more explicit our views the better. The cure is partly wrought when the disease is thoroughly known. Far from being cast down with these views, it is our comfort that the most sensibly convinced

²⁴ Psal. cxxxix. 23.

vinced of their sin, are the most welcome to CHRIST. They will see " grace abound, " who have felt sin abound ²⁵ ". In CHRIST there is relief. The most unbelieving, the proudest nature, " the fountain opened in his " heart for sin and for uncleanness ²⁶ ", can make whole. O that we may all flee thither, and seek " that balm which is in Gilead, and " the Physician there ²⁷ " !

²⁵ Rom. v. 20.²⁶ Zech. xiii. 1.²⁷ Jer. viii. 22.



S E R M O N I V

The Deceitfulness and Corruption

of the Heart.

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]

Preached at [Location]

January 17th 1788

The heart is deceitful above all things,

and desperately wicked.

HAVE been endeavouring to enter

into the heart, that foot of pity

"treads" which is in the nature

and to discover to you the ground

sources from whence the overflowing of un-

godliness arise: differing in their discovery

of which have the most direct tendency to

bring us low into the dust of humiliation

and to lead us to him who taketh away the

"sin of the world."

That "God is of purer eyes than to

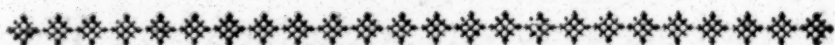
"behold iniquity," and that "no evil can

"dwell."



S E R M O N IV.

The Deceitfulness and Corruption
of the Heart.



JEREMIAH XVII. 9.

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and
desperately wicked, who can know it?*

I HAVE been endeavouring to enter
into the heart, "that root of bit-
terness" which is in our nature;
and to discover to you the grand
sources from whence the overflowings of un-
godliness arise: distinct and clear discoveries
of which have the most direct tendency to
bring us low into the dust of humiliation,
and to lead us to him "who taketh away the
"sin of the world" ¹ ".

That "God is of purer eyes than to
"behold iniquity" ² "and that "no evil can
F 2 "dwell

¹ John i. 29.

² Hab. i. 13.

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" dwell with him ³ ", is evident from his nature, and the discoveries he hath made of his adorable perfections in his Word. He cannot but require of his creatures to be like himself, possessed of " truth in the inward parts ". It is his property " to try the hearts and reins ⁴ ". The pure in heart ⁵ " only can enjoy his approbation; but " our inward parts are very wickedness ⁶ ". We are become the very reverse of his nature: the whole man is corrupt before him; root and branch he is polluted. We are therefore " enemies in our mind: for the carnal mind " is enmity against God ⁷ ". He searcheth our hearts, and sees the wickedness of our inward parts: and what can so provoke his displeasure, as the perfect views of the intire apostasy of our nature from him? Our " transgressions may be many, and our backslidings increased "; but what are all compared with the natural deep-rooted aversion of our hearts to him? A child, though at times disobedient, through the prevalence of temptation, may be born with, where dutifulness is still the habit; but do we see that he

³ Psal. v. 4.

⁵ Matt. v. 8.

⁷ Rom. viii. 7.

⁴ Jer. xvii. 10.

⁶ Psal. v. 9.

he is determinately and constantly bent on disobedience? that his whole heart is contriving how to grieve and provoke us, what human patience would not be wearied, and expulsion from the family ensue? God hath indeed tempered Judgment with Mercy, and in the depth of his Wisdom and the riches of his Grace, whilst he hath shewn his fearful indignation against the sinful nature, "in his own Son made in the likeness of sinful flesh"⁸; hath found out a way to spare the sinful persons. But neither the rich mercy nor the righteous judgment can be seen before the real discovery of our state appears: till then we can neither revere the holy, nor love the pardoning God.

Let us therefore continue the inquiry into ourselves, and see what *branches* spring from this corrupted tree, where Unbelief is at the root and Pride the body; and it may be said of them, "Their name is Legion, for they are many"⁹. The most remarkable I shall endeavour to point out to you under the Heads of *Self-will, Disobedience, Impatience, Wrath, Envy, Hatred, Malice and Revenge*; the grand characteristics of a fallen spirit.

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1st, Self⁸ Rom. viii. 3.⁹ Mark v. 9.

1st, *Self-will* is the first branch of Pride. We "would be as Gods". Our will is our law. *Sic volo, sic jubeo* *; is the language of fallen nature. Hence it is a very just observation, "Every man hath a Pope in his own breast." You see this in every station of life: How imperious are we? How peremptory our commands? How determined to be obeyed, right or wrong, when we have fixed our resolution? How obstinate in our errors? How deaf to advice? "I will have it so," is thought reason sufficient. But, Lords as we are, we dwell among others like ourselves; our wills interfere; and amidst this contrariety of desires what but confusion can ensue? Hence, whilst each will have his own way, the world is in a continual tempest; the winds contend, the waters foam, and disputes and animosities and every evil work disturb the peace of Families, of Cities, and of Kingdoms.

Closely connected with this is,

2^{dly}, The spirit of *Disobedience*. We cannot brook restraint from God or man. The yoke of God's commands is irksome to us, and

* "SO I WILL, SO I COMMAND."

and our subjection to man constrained. We aspire after independence. This is the darling wish of our souls. Hence it is not only the general thought of our heart, that God is a hard master, and his commandments grievous, so that when we obey or are restrained by them, it is merely through fear; but also, dreadful as the sanctions are, we dare to break the sacred bonds, and "cast away the cords from us". And this disobedient spirit particularly manifests itself in our rebellious dispositions towards those whom God hath put in authority over us. From our infancy with what difficulty are our stubborn hearts bowed to submission? What propensity for doing what we are forbid? Restraint only whets, as it were, the appetite of concupiscence. As we grow up, disobedience grows with us; and in our various stations shews itself. In the *State* every little Politician would be a prime Minister; and murmurs that he should be subject to those who, he conceits, are so unfit to govern. He assumes the right therefore to censure their measures, to evade as much as he dares their injunctions; nor counts it any sin to "withhold custom from those, to whom custom is due".

In the *social* connections of life this spirit still more appears. The forward youth thinks it hard to have a father contradicting and restraining him. He would be glad to be left to himself and his own management; and hates the needful correction or reproof. And whoever have brought up children can witness with aching hearts with what difficulty they bent their stubborn necks, and how often they have proved rebellious and obstinate against them. "Disobedient to parents"¹⁰, is the character of our ungodly nature. God hath constituted the Husband to be "the head of the Wife"; and hath pronounced as his will, "that her desire shall be to her Husband, and he shall rule over her"¹¹: yet what Woman is there in a thousand that doth not wish the word *obey* out of the matrimonial service? And whilst the many, from the time they have vowed, make it their labour to invert that order God hath established, are not the best wanting in that "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in God's sight of so great price"? The School-boy and Apprentice regard usually their state as that of hard

¹⁰ Rom. i. 30.¹¹ Gen. iii. 16.

hard servitude; and though their neck be brought under the yoke, their heart sighs for liberty. The rod can hardly restrain them from taking it before the time; whilst at certain seasons the spirit of Disobedience is too strong to be withheld by fear, and subjects them to deserved correction. The servant, discontented at his station, thinks it unreasonable always to submit to a man like himself: he will not be found fault with; but his heart, if not his tongue, answers again: on his own head he will often act without orders, and sometimes contrary to them. He kindles at rebuke, and will not bear expostulation. Instead of "being subject with fear and trembling, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward"; it is with difficulty that the most gentle masters or mistresses are born with; whilst the common and the just complaint is, the sauciness and perverseness of servants, and the general wish that they could live without them.

3dly, *Impatience* is among the desperate wickednesses of the heart: It is that rising of heart we feel against God or man, as
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our will is crossed by them, or our expectations disappointed.

(1.) Against God: this temper frequently appears under his corrections and afflictions. It was not without deep knowledge of the human nature, that Satan said to God concerning *Job*, "Put forth thy hand now and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face"¹³. For such usually are the effects produced by his chastisements.

1. Under *Poverty* this impatience is seen, especially when we are reduced to it from preceding affluence. When *Agur* prayed against Poverty, he gives this reason for it, "Lest I take the name of my God in vain"¹⁴: he knew how apt the heart was in such a state to murmur. And who is there thus needy, that hath not experienced the risings of discontent, and secret repinings of heart? Have you been brought low? Doth the world frown upon you? Are you reduced to be obliged to others? How dissatisfied are you with this your situation? How many hard thoughts of God rise up in your mind? Whoever hath been conversant among the indigent, must have

¹³ Job i. 11.

¹⁴ Prov. xxx. 9.

have been often a witness of this complaining discontented spirit. Every man thinks God partial in the distribution of his gifts, and dares find fault with him merely because he "does what he will with his own"¹⁵.

2. The same spirit is seen under bodily *Afflictions*. "Doth God lay his hand heavy upon you? Is your flesh dried up as a potsherd, and your moisture as the drought in summer"¹⁶? Doth he cut you off with pining sickness, and from day even to night "make an end of you"¹⁷? How restless are you under his hand? How fretful your temper? your body is not more uneasy. You may not seem in your own eyes to be angry with God, but be assured that this is at the bottom; and you give your anger vent on those about you. Nothing is done to your mind. You are scarcely touched, even by the friendly hand that means to assist you, but you complain. The least delay or mistake makes you impatient; and troublesome as by your sickness you unavoidably are to all around, you make yourself still infinitely more so by your discontent with them; and
whoever

¹⁵ Matt. xx. 11, 15.

¹⁶ Psal. xxxii. 4.

¹⁷ Isa. xxxviii. 12.

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whoever comes near you must hear all your complaints, aggravated, repeated, as though there was "no sorrow like your own"; and what is this but that spirit which "fretteth against the LORD"¹⁸? Whoever hath attended sick beds, needs no evidence of this truth.

3. *Impatience* rages when God takes away some darling our heart was fixed upon. GOD in his wise providence afflicts us for our good; and when he sees his gifts abused or made a snare to us, he kindly resumes them. Then what a ferment is in the soul? and often violent "as a bear robbed of her whelps", our repinings testify our displeasure against God. Who hath not heard the cries of impatient Anguish? Who hath not seen the determined obstinacy of inconsolable Grief? Their idols, like *Micah's*, are snatched away: their life was bound up in the Husband, the Wife, the Child, the Friend, or some dear object of their affections, and they are dead, irrecoverably lost to them: and now, like *Rachel*, "they refuse to be comforted"¹⁹. Then what reflections arise in the mind against God, as though cruelty,

not

¹⁸ Prov. xiii. 3.

¹⁹ Jer. xxxi. 15.

not kindness, injustice, not mercy, directed the blow? With what determinedness, whilst they can, do they hold it fast, as though they would not let it go? And if it be violently plucked from their arms, how fretful is the language of their hearts, "It is better for me "to die than to live"²⁰". Hence in some the most fatal effects follow; by impious violence on themselves they seek to fly from God; or in their sullen sorrows pine away: and where matters go not to this excess, still, who doth resign to God his gifts as he ought, without once impeaching his kindness, or murmuring at his dispensations?

Many other providential disappointments might be brought to evidence the same thing. But from what hath been already said, whoever observes his heart will find sufficient proofs of this spirit within him.

(2.) *Impatience* discovers itself also with respect to *ourselves*. We cannot bear our burdens with content: our weaknesses, infirmities, the discoveries of our corruptions, all operate this way. When we do not answer the opinion we have conceived of ourselves, when

²⁰ Jonah iv. 3.

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when what we have been engaged in does not satisfy our expectations, when we cannot please ourselves in any matter we have in hand, when by our imprudence or mistakes we have run ourselves into trouble, how uneasy have we made ourselves; turned self-tormentors, and added not only sorrow to sorrow, but sin to sin? This will be particularly observed by those who have some knowledge of their own hearts in their *spiritual* concerns. If you have fallen into temptation, and been laid lower in your own eyes by your misbehaviour; if after many struggles you find still the risings of old corruptions; if you enjoy not the peace which others do; if you have not made that advancement in the divine life you proposed to yourself; in these and the like instances, instead of quietly lying down in the dust of self-abasement, impatience will be ready to increase the evil, by fretting at being found so bad. This deserves to be much remarked, because I fear sometimes we are apt to indulge complaints about our corruptions, and mistake them as tokens of humility, when they savour more of the spirit we have been describing.

(3.) This evil temper is shewn also towards *others*. We can as little bear disappointment or correction from the world, as afflictions from God; and hence a continual ground of uneasiness. We have naturally no compassion for the faults or infirmities of others, and yet require the greatest indulgence to our own. Hence not only in the weightier matters of the world, but on the most inconsiderable trifles (and here ofteneft it may be observed, because these oftener occur) this spirit works. You have something to be done, and the person, through ignorance or mistake, either cannot or does not please you; such an one acts foolishly in his business, or imprudently in his Christian course; you cannot after all your pains prevail on this person to follow your advice or take your instructions; upon such occasions what is your temper? You are heated, hasty, impatient with them; and your spirit sharpens your remonstrance. Thus you exasperate, when you should either overlook or correct with mildness. On the other hand, when you yourself offend, how little can you bear reproof? though sweetned with love, how hardly is it palatable, and how intolerably offensive

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offensive if accompanied with harshness or
aggravations?

4thly, *Anger* is another temper of the fallen spirit. "It is the resentment shewn to injuries or provocations, whether real or imaginary." Our pride is generally at the bottom; that is hurt: then our bosom rises, our countenance changes, our voice is quickened, our words are bitter: and this frequently is the case on the most insignificant occasions. We cannot bear contradiction: though being in the midst of many like ourselves, we must meet with it: we have set a value upon ourselves which others do not seem to take notice of; we are ill-used by those from whom we least expected it; we are imposed upon by those we trusted; we hear in company something disrespectful said of us, or it is reported to us by others; our person is insulted, our character defamed, or our friend injured: then the heart boils, and passion struggles for vent: sometimes circumstances restrain it, sometimes it rages and is violent, "returning evil for evil, and railing for railing". And this temper especially breaks out at home, where, on how trivial a matter are our houses filled with disputes,

disputes, and noise, and clamour, and every evil work?

5thly, *Envy* also is what the fallen spirit lusteth unto. "It is the repining the heart feels
" at another's superior excellence or prospe-
" rity." Because his father loved *Joseph*, his brethren hated him; they regarded with an evil eye the coat of many colours, and it had nearly cost him his life. We cannot bear that another should be more esteemed, more successful or richer than ourselves; especially if he was once our equal; particularly if he be of the same profession, or competitor with us for any distinction. Hence, since "many
" run in the race, and one only receiveth the
" prize ", the effect of disappointed pride appears in all men; for *all* have some things wherein they fail; though in others they may be the objects of envy. This is the source from which most part of the conversation in company arises: each hath his complaints; accuses the partiality of the world; wants to hear something depreciating of the envied rival; is ready to derogate from his worth; and pleased if any step be taken to lessen his excellence or remove him out of the way. Hence slander, scandal, backbiting,
G lies,

lies, are invented, reported, propagated : and in general, it becomes a difficult matter among such misrepresentations to know a man's real character.

And, whilst Vice universally thus prevails in the world, those who are separated from the world will find the remainders of the same corrupt temper. If you see a brother, whose graces are more eminent, and whose advancement in the divine life surpasses your own ; especially if thereby he is highly esteemed by those, whose favour you value ; above all, if his superior piety eclipses and makes you less taken notice of ; you must be very deeply humbled indeed, if envious jealousy against such an one does not find a place in your heart.

6thly, *Hatred*: " This is the settled dislike
 " of those by whom we have been injured, or
 " whose conduct in any manner reproaches
 " us." Thus " *Esau* hated *Jacob* " for de-
 priving him of his blessing, " and in his heart
 " said, The days of mourning for my father
 " are at hand, then will I slay my brother
 " *Jacob* ²¹ ". And our hatred betrays itself
 on

²¹ Gen. xxvii. 41.

on the appearance of the person disliked, especially if it be unexpected. When " his brethren beheld *Joseph* afar off, they said, " Behold, this dreamer cometh ²² ", and took counsel to slay him. You hear it often said, " I forgive, but I cannot forget." Here the root remains. Though an apparent reconciliation seems for a time to heal the wound, it continues to fester within. This is the case in a thousand particulars which might be instanced, but it appears no where more frequently than where Religion is concerned. There is an eternal " enmity put between " the seed of the serpent and the seed of the " woman ²³ "; and those who are of the latter must be hated of the former. As their light " reproves abidingly the works of darkness, " and testifies of the world that its deeds are " evil ²⁴ ", it cannot but produce hatred. Since the day that *Cain* hated *Abel*, " because his " works were righteous ", so it is still. " He " that is born after the flesh, persecutes and " hates him that is born after the Spirit ²⁵ ". And no marvel: " He that was a murderer " from the beginning ", could not but stamp

G 2

this

²² Gen. xxxvii. 18, 19.²³ Gen. iii. 15.²⁴ Eph. v. 11, 13.²⁵ Gal. iv. 29.

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this strong mark of his image upon the fallen
heart.

7thly, *Malice*: This is Envy and Hatred united and heightened. It is peculiarly the spirit of the devil. "It is the delight men feel in the wickedness or misfortunes of others, particularly of their enemies." This temper shews itself abundantly in the world. There is indeed a conspiracy against God: not content to serve the devil a little, we seem ambitious to serve him much; as though it was our veriest happiness. To engage a number to join in the same "excess of riot"; to see the drunkenness or quarrels of others; to teize and exasperate those who you know to be fretful; especially to prevail on some, who made profession of Religion, to betray it; what satisfaction does it give to the heart? And how ready are you to glory over them, and, devil-like, turn accuser, and report, and reproach them for the very sins you tempted them to commit? You hear something evil of your enemy, and how happy are you to run open-mouthed into the world and spread it, heightened by your relation? One differs from you in his religious sentiments,

ments, and happens to give a handle for offence. How confidently you attribute it to the *corruptness* of his principles, and reproach the whole body for the faults of an individual? If any misery or calamity hath befallen the object of your hatred, doth not your heart feel a secret glow? Does your rival in trade fail, what a satisfaction? Is he that troubled you called off by death? the tolling-bell is music in your ears. Is your adversary fallen? immediately your cry is, "There, there, so" would we have it²⁶". These are the indications of the malicious spirit.

8thly, *Revenge* brings up the rear; the last, but not the least of our spiritual wickednesses. "It is the desire or actual infliction of some punishment, according to the dictates of malice, on those who have offended us." "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the LORD²⁷". But man, the arrogant assumer of God's prerogatives, would be saying, nay, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." Hence the contrivances how to return the injuries we have suffered; the watching the best time and opportunity for it; the restlessness till that time comes; the eagerness to seize the moment;

G 3

ment;

²⁶ Psal. xxxv. 25.²⁷ Rom. xii. 19.

ment; the violence if your adversary falls into your power; and the pleasure you take in tormenting when occasion offers. It is a common saying, "Revenge is sweet;" and it is a true one: yet what a dreadful mark of a diabolical spirit, and an especial proof of the doctrine advanced in the text, "that the heart is "above all things desperately wicked"?

If the hints above given have the blessed effects of leading us more experimentally into the knowledge of ourselves, then shall not our labour have been bestowed in vain. For the following effects will be produced by it:

1. In proportion as we discover the vileness of our nature, we shall have admiring apprehensions of the riches of God's grace, who thought upon us in this low, this deplorably wretched and wicked estate. That when we were the enemies of God and his law, and no one trace of any thing pleasing remained, but "evil, and that continually", was found in us; that when we were become abominable, yea altogether abominable; that when by nature we were as apostate from God as the devils themselves; that *then* God should have compassion on us: that *then* he "should
" think

" think towards us thoughts of peace, and
 " not of evil "; that *then* he should plan out
 a covenant of Redemption; that *then* he
 should give his own Son; that *then* " the
 " brightness of the Father's glory " should be
 incarnate; that *then* he should " lay on him
 " the sins of the whole world "; that *then* " in
 " his own body on the tree he should take
 " away sin by the sacrifice of himself "; that
then he should bleed and groan and die in tor-
 ment, in ignominy, in dereliction, for us, mi-
 serable sinners; for us, ungodly; for us, his
 enemies; for us, that were fallen into the belly
 of hell; that he might redeem, justify, sanc-
 tify, glorify us. " This indeed is love ²⁸ ! Love,
 " the height and length and breadth and depth
 " of which surpasseth knowledge ²⁹ ". Did
 we know more of ourselves we should know
 more of God's love to us; and because " much
 " hath been forgiven us ", be led to " love
 " him much ³⁰ ". What a motive is this to
 search into the depth of corruption, that we
 may feel ourselves more constrained by the
 debt of gratitude !

2. If such is our nature as hath been de-
 scribed, how absolutely necessary does it ap-
 pear,

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²⁸ 1 John iv. 10.

²⁹ Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

³⁰ Luke vii. 47.

pear, and how little need we marvel at what CHRIST said, "Except a man be born again, " he cannot see the kingdom of GOD ³¹ " ? These cannot be the tempers which make us " meet for an inheritance among the saints in " light ". Whilst they are undiscovered and unsubdued, " what communion can there be " between righteousness and unrighteousness, " CHRIST and *Belial* " ? The necessity of the new-birth, of a real participation of a divine nature, of a change, not of names or opinions or outfides, but of heart, is indeed at present strangely unknown or derided ; whilst *one part* think their nature *good enough*, and regeneration no better than mystic *Enthusiasm* ; and *the other*, that if we have been baptized in the Church, have partaken of her ordinances, led a decent life, and shewn a zeal for the externals of Religion, that *then* we have all the regeneration which the scripture exhorts us to look for. But alas ! the superficial religion of the latter is as far from real conversion of heart, as the blindness or infidelity of the former. We must be born again ; we must experimentally know a transition " from death " unto life ³², and from the power of Satan " unto GOD ³³ ". We must be " renewed in " the

³¹ John iii. 3.³² John v. 24.³³ Acts xxvi. 18.

" the spirit of our minds ³⁴ ; we must put off
" the old man ³⁵ , and put on the Lord JESUS
" CHRIST ³⁶ ; we must be transformed into
" his image and likeness ³⁷ ", before we can
ever hope to " see him face to face ". And
how earnestly will they seek it, who feel how
deeply they need it ; and know that except
the Holy Ghost work this effectual change in
us, " that which is born of the flesh is and
" must be for ever flesh ³⁸ " ? Happy is the
man who, taught in any measure to KNOW
himself, flies to the throne of grace, and, ac-
cording to his necessities, pleads with impor-
tunity for an abundant supply of the Spirit of
CHRIST to lighten his darkness, help his
weakness, discover the deceitfulness, change
the corruption of his nature, and to " make
" him a new heart, and create a right spirit
" within him ". Such a one shall be rescued
from his native misery, and " grow up into
" him, who is the head, even CHRIST ", till in
heaven " he comes to the measure of the sta-
" ture of his fulness ", and everlasting victory
over a desperately wicked heart shall crown
his happy labour.

³⁴ Ephes. iv. 23.³⁵ Ephes. iv. 22.³⁶ Rom. xiii. 14.³⁷ 2 Cor. iii. 18.³⁸ John iii. 6.



SEEMON V.

The Decembris and Compendio
of the Her

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S E R M O N V.

The Deceitfulness and Corruption of the Heart.



JEREMIAH XVII. 9.

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and
desperately wicked, who can know it?*



HY is dust and ashes proud? Who can solve the question, or shew satisfactorily wherein we can justly glory? Surely the more we examine, the more we shall be convinced, that "Pride was never made for man:" for *man*, a creature so fallen; so polluted in his nature; so desperately wicked in heart; so corrupt in all his ways. Yet dust and ashes, *sinful* dust and ashes, will be proud notwithstanding; and vaunt itself "as though it were some great thing"; will tell of its dignity; glory in its rectitude; admire its own excellencies; extol its goodness; and boast almost its divinity,

vinity, "as God knowing good and evil"; as self-taught to decide on every instance of right and wrong; and naturally charmed with Virtue's beauty, disposed with faithfulness to embrace it. Strange ignorance! Infatuation lamentable! and claiming much more justly our pity, than the poor lunatic that struts a King in his iron-fenced cell, with his crown of straw and tattered robes of fancied majesty. "KNOW THYSELF," vain man! thou mass of corruption; thou polluted both in flesh and spirit; thou abomination of the most Holy; Know thyself, and be confounded. "The crown is fallen
 "from thy head; thy glory is departed from
 "thee"; thy all is lost: arise then, and take to thee thy proper garments; clothe thyself in sackcloth, confess "thou art vile, abhor thy-
 "self in dust and ashes"¹.

Happy will it be for us, my friends, when the discovery of our hearts has laid us thus low. "Before Honour is Humility"². By "*Pride* the angels fell from heaven"³; by pride man also fell on earth; by pride we sink deeper still in the abyss of sin; and by
 pride

¹ Job xl 4 — xlii. 6.² Prov. xv. 33.³ 1 Tim. iii. 6.

pride obstinately persisted in, with them we must for ever be cast into the bottomless pit.

Humility and lowliness of mind are the only ways by which we can ascend from the depths of corruption. By Humility alone we can be led to seek the restoration of the image we have lost upon earth; and by * Humility we shall mount, as on the steps of *Jacob's* ladder, to the heaven for which we were originally designed. O precious Humility, what a friend art thou to fallen man! But how may we obtain this virtue of Humility? Here is the question: and what answer can be given? KNOW THYSELF. So far as we see the truth of our state; so far as we really inquire into the mystery of iniquity within; so far as we are convinced of the deep and utter apostasy of our nature; so far, and no farther, shall we be humbled. Now to effect this hath been my purpose in the preceding Discourses on these words, which subject will be concluded in the present. O that the truths they contain may, through the illumination

* What is here spoken of Humility, must be understood to imply no more than that the sense of our guilt alone can make the Gospel welcome to us. For it is this humbling discovery of our own hearts which convinces us that CHRIST must be to us all and in all.

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nation of the Holy Spirit, be made the means,
if but to any *one* soul, of true Humility; and
consequently, of leading it to him who pro-
mises "to revive the spirit of the humble, and
"to revive the heart of the contrite"⁴!

That the heart of man is desperately wicked
I have attempted to shew, from the considera-
tion of some of the chief tempers of his soul:
from whence it hath appeared, that he is by
nature *unbelieving, proud, self-willed, disobedient,*
impatient, angry, envious, full of hatred, mali-
cious, revengeful. I shall farther pursue this
mortifying subject in the consideration of his
earthly-mindedness and vile affections.

We are fallen under the dominion of *Flesh*
and *Sense*. Every object from *without* tends
to ensnare us, and to draw forth the world-
liness and lust which is *within* us. All our
wisdom is chiefly employed in contriving to
make provision for these; whilst the lusts
themselves, "the lust of the eye, and the lust
"of the flesh", insatiate as the grave, are daily
crying, *Give, give.*

I. The *lust of the eye*, or the love of money,
is naturally fixed in our hearts; and how
deeply

⁴ Isai. lvii. 15.

deeply you may easily see, if you will consider the manner of *getting* or *using* the unrighteous mammon.

It must be observed, before I enter particularly into the workings of this temper, that Covetousness sometimes reigns *alone* or chief in the heart, sometimes it is *accompanied* with other interfering vices; *alone*, when the covetous man is merely intent upon heaping up, longs to see so much in his bags; goes and counts over his fums with secret delight; marks every piece; and worships with most unfeigned affection his golden god. Sometimes *accompanied*, when other vicious passions also call for their gratification. And here the greatest profusion of money may be consistent with the most covetous desire of it. The Statesman, whose love of the unrighteous mammon shall make him infamously to fleece the public, may yet spend his thousands of that ill-gotten treasure in Bribery and Luxury. The Tradesman, whose attention to enrich himself makes him wear out his life in almost sleepless industry and care, may yet be a squanderer of those very riches in a Tavern or Bagnio. The Highwayman, whose love of filthy lucre tempts him daily to hazard his neck at the Gallows,

Gallows, may yet be found bestowing that very idol on his Mistress in a Brothel. These may all be just as strong instances of this temper as the Miser. The only difference is, their other vices at times are more predominant, and they clash with each other. Pride, Lust and Vanity, take the ascendancy, and then the fruits of covetousness are dispersed, and new calls arise to exercise it. Hence a young person may be as covetous as an old one, though the former never kept five guineas long at a time in his possession, and the other never spent five shillings out of his thousands but in absolute necessities. I note this, because few persons imagine that Covetousness and Prodigality can be so nearly allied.

Having premised this, I say, the love of money is naturally fixed in our hearts. This will be evident in the desires of the heart after it. Now examine yourselves whether some or other, more or fewer, of the following symptoms have not appeared in you. When you have seen another's affluence, have you never felt the secret wish, "O that it were mine?" When alone, hath not your mind been running out in imaginary prospects? grasping at the distant hope of affluence?

affluence? and pleased with the shadow, though every appearance of actual success was wanting in your views? Hath not this principle set you on contriving how to abound? Yea, hath it not been in your imagination the chief good, and infinitely superior to "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness"? You at least must be convinced of this, who will consider the anxiety which habitually you shew after the world; the vexations when things favour not your gains; the delight when the unrighteous mammon flows in upon you; and the uniform plan you keep in view, of securing and increasing your store. The world wakes with you early in the morning, and the thoughts of gain prevent the thoughts of God: you go forth into the world engaged in the pursuit of gold, not godliness: you weary yourself, it may be, till night; and late lie down with this upon your heart. Thus it is the first thing with you when you awake, and the last before you sleep: nay, your very dreams, it may be, are tinged with the same, and place you still amidst the business, merchandise and labour of the world; and your fancy imagines a new scene of hopes and fears and joys. Nay, even
H your

Gallows, may yet be found bestowing that very idol on his Mistress in a Brothel. These may all be just as strong instances of this temper as the Miser. The only difference is, their other vices at times are more predominant, and they clash with each other. Pride, Lust and Vanity, take the ascendancy, and then the fruits of covetousness are dispersed, and new calls arise to exercise it. Hence a young person may be as covetous as an old one, though the former never kept five guineas long at a time in his possession, and the other never spent five shillings out of his thousands but in absolute necessities. I note this, because few persons imagine that Covetousness and Prodigality can be so nearly allied.

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your very prayers (if time be spared for what you call your prayers) are interrupted by the same lucrative thoughts. The Sabbath is polluted by them; the holy Table of the LORD, which you presume to approach, is defiled with them; your "heart is full, and out of its abundance" the streams flow uninterrupted.

I would observe, that whilst the constant prevalence of this temper, in a greater or less degree, is the sure mark of the bondage of corruption in the worldling; the *renewed heart* will find great cause to mourn over the remainders of the same inordinate concupiscence, and to condemn those idolatrous desires which would intrude themselves even into their most solemn services.

From this source a correspondent conversation naturally flows. Men feel themselves in their element when the discourse turns upon matters suited to make them worldly-wise. They will take pleasure in recounting their advantages: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he goeth away, then he boasteth." The lips of

of such persons will be open to flattery and fawning toward their patron or their customers: they will be very ready to reflect on a tradesman that undersells them; they will studiously avoid, as painful and interruptive of their views, whatever is "for the use of" edifying, which might minister grace to "the hearers"; and be silent when such discourse is started; but when the world and the things thereof is the topic, their tongues will be let loose, and their attention fixed; these are the symptoms of earthly-mindedness; and where circumstances give them scope for appearing they never fail, though in different measures, to discover the power of this corruption in the heart. And this will be farther evident in their manner of getting money, which will ever be, more or less, by acts of fraud and injustice; by unreasonable profits, by adulterating their goods, or being scanty in their measures; by lending at unlawful advantage; by making the necessities or ignorance of others a handle to oppress them; by borrowing or running into debt, when they have no real intention or prospect of repaying; by making the Lord's day a day of merchandise; by withholding restitution of ill-gotten gain: so true it will

appear that the love of money is the root of all evil; and that wherever it is mens grand aim to "abound, and they make "haste to be rich, they cannot be innocent⁶ ".

There is no wickedness of the heart more flagrant it may be, or less taken notice of than this. "The god of this world" hath closed the eyes of his votaries, yea, hath gilded with every specious name the most abominable of our corrupt tempers: we call our covetousness a proper regard for our families; our slavery to mammon, honest industry; our love of the world, prudence; and our rapaciousness, minding the main chance. And thus whilst this maxim is received, "Get as much as you can in an honest way;" that is to say, without risking your neck at the gallows, we see men, the slaves of this abominable temper, quiet and easy, without any apprehensions of their sin or danger; yea, rather blessing themselves in having cared for their own houses, and acted the part of a good relation in accumulating for them so genteel a portion.

The

⁶ Prov. xxviii. 20.

The *use* of money, as well as the *manner* of getting it, shews the covetousness of the heart. By natural obligation, as well as by the positive law of GOD, we are bound ^{ss} to "do justice, and to love mercy" ^{7 ss}: and in this chiefly consists our duty towards our neighbour: but to both of these covetousness opposes itself more or less; and makes us *unjust* and *unmerciful* towards our fellow-creatures. A faithful examination of our hearts will shew us quickly in what measure this spirit hath reigned in us.

Justice is "the rendring unto all their dues, "and owing no man any thing:" but covetousness hath harpy talons, and is too ready to hold fast whatever it hath grasped. Hence money is parted with as so many drops of blood by the avaricious: and the most feel too great an attachment to Self in the matter. In worldly dealings we may observe it, in peoples backwardness to pay the debts they have contracted; by their endeavours to beat down the price of any thing and save a trifle, it may be, at the expence of many lies; their great partiality to self in their bargains and contracts; their grudging the necessary de-

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mands

⁷ Micah vi. 8.

mands of the State, and readiness to defraud it in customs and taxes; their robbing God's Altar of the portion his service demands; counting lightly of his Ministers, and thinking it no duty to communicate to them of their *worldly things*. These, among innumerable other instances of injustice, are the evidences of a covetous heart.

Mercy is "the regard we show to objects "in distress." Covetousness makes a man selfish, and unfeeling to the wants of others. Though many a one thinks himself enough exempt from covetousness, if he can say he is punctually honest, and pays every one his due. But alas! "If our brother stand in need, and we shut up our bowels of compassion from him", how little will our honesty excuse us from the charge of being uncharitable? The subsistence and working of this selfishness you must needs have observed, by the most transient glance on the world or your own heart. When an object of distress hath fallen in your way, have you never avoided it; and, like the Priest and Levite, passed by on the other side^s? When that could not be done, and the importunity of want was clamorous,

^s Luke x. 31, 32.

clamorous, how furly have you spoken to hide your covetousness, and added unjust reproach to their necessities? How little have you made it your care to inquire for the needy, and to relieve them? Where and when have the hungry been fed, the thirsty drank of your cup, or the naked been clothed by you? The sick visited, the aged, the widow, and the orphan relieved by your kind hand? And this, when it was in the power of your hand to give, without distressing yourself, or violating any duty you owe to others. Though it may be on such occasions you have a ready excuse. You were greatly afraid of encouraging idleness, you have a family of your own; you do not abound yourself: but are not these vain pretexts to cover the selfishness of your heart? I mean not to countenance every idle vagrant; but where you know there is need, is your hand open? Your care for your family is laudable, but it shews the covetousness of your heart, when it makes you insensible to others wants. You may be low yourself; but though you labour with your hands for a maintenance, you may still have two mites to spare to the greater indigence of others; and whenever, according to your ability, you are not "ready to distribute,

"bute, willing to communicate⁹", you are certainly under the influence of covetousness.

It must be remarked indeed, that there are many, whose splendid appearance of benevolence would seem to exempt them from uncharitableness: but it must be observed also, that a tender constitution may not be able to withstand the cries of an object in distress; that the affectation of liberality may overcome the sordidness of our temper; that the hope of "hiding a multitude of sins"¹⁰*, by such (ignorantly esteemed) commutative acts of goodness; that the importunity of a friend whom we would not disoblige, and many other sinful principles, not the true *love of mercy*, may be the motives to our charity. And this is always evident, if the pittance from your abundance goes from you with reluctance; if you are afterwards commending yourself for your generosity; or if, while you are not wholly destitute of deeds of almsgiving, you seek not to be in a capacity to abound in them, as you might and ought.

If

⁹ 1 Tim. vi. 18.

¹⁰ James v. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

* A greatly mistaken text as to me it seems; *hiding the multitude of sins*, refers to the sins of the converted person in one place, and in the other intimates the charitable care to conceal them, as opposed to reporting them.

If it be not in your heart to deny yourself many things, that you may have the more to bestow; if you have not the wants of your brethren habitually as your concern; you may see the want of mercy, and consequently the influence of selfishness.

I might further observe the same respecting *lending*, for a small sum lent is often a great charity. Covetousness hates to hazard a penny: the payment must be secured before the purse-strings open, whatever be the call: "Go, and come again, and to morrow I will lend", says thy selfish heart, "when thou hast it by thee". The tricks, evasions, and castings-about of the covetous are indeed endless; and oftentimes the greatest oppressions are countenanced under the shew of friendship and kindness. But what hath been said will serve to shew what our hearts naturally are, and what in too many they continue to be; and must be in all, if preventing, restraining, converting Grace doth not keep within bounds the stream of corruption, or dry up its fountain.

II. The *fleshy lusts* which dwell within us, shew the "desperate wickedness of our
" hearts.

" hearts ". Lawless appetite hath now seized the reins, and hurries on the body to sensual gratifications. By *Indolence* and *Excess* provision is made for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; and, as the effect, *Impurity* follows in thought, in word and action.

1. *Indolence* the flesh delights in. Labour and diligence are its aversion; though since the fall expressly enjoined us. But in general labour we must. The world produces nought but briers and thorns till subdued by the sweat of the brow. Though a few by the possession of affluence become in some measure exempted from labour, the far greater part must work before they eat: yet the love of indolence will appear the same in the one as in the other. The morning comes, with what reluctance do you rise? It is too soon, it is too cold, saith every man's natural sloth. " A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep " ¹¹ ; necessity urges you to rise: but the same temper follows you; " the fool foldeth his hands together " ¹² : any little excuse is easily seized to suspend your diligence, and trifle away your time.

And

¹¹ Prov. xxiv. 33.

¹² Eccles. iv. 5.

And when you do work, you often feel the thought, "What a weariness is it"? "I wish
"I had enough to live upon, I would then
"sit down at my ease." If you have seen others, whose affluence hath been construed into a prescription for idleness, have you not envied them as more happy than yourself? And in other points you will find the sluggard still in your work, not doing it with *all your might*; an eye-servant, a loiterer; lengthening the intervals of leisure allowed you, or returning with reluctance to your task. Or if every nerve is strained, and you are labouring night and day to gain; pray what is at the bottom of all this? Why, usually an intention to be idle at the last, and spend the end of your life in pleasing indolence, when you can say to your soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease; eat, drink and be merry"¹⁴.

In the superior ranks of life this temper seems to reign uncontrolled, except where ambition interferes. What is usually the life of the great and the affluent, but varied scenes of pleasure, calculated merely to gratify Indolence?

¹⁴ Luke xii. 19.

dolence? Amusements, cards, &c. visits, sleep, santring, eating or drinking, or some insignificant work (which may be better called *play*) these take up all their time; and to-morrow is only a repetition of the sloth of to-day. The rich cannot be at the pains to superintend their own accounts. The Dignitary in the church fills his stall at his ease, and devolves the drudgery of Prayer and Preaching to some needy substitute. Labour is the general aversion; whilst every thing that can gratify indolence is contrived and purchased at any expence.

It is from this temper that, though we so often hear every body complaining of the badness of the times, we can find so few willing to exert themselves to restrain it. The Magistrate, the Minister, the People, care not to trouble themselves; the law lies dormant, zeal is extinguished, and sloth sheds its soporiferous influences all around.

2. *Excess* follows close on the heels of Indolence. They mutually minister to each other. Meat, drink and sleep are what the natural man lusts after, not merely to sustain nature, but to pamper it: not to satisfy
its

its just demands, but to gratify its inordinate appetites.

The niceness and curiousness of the affluent, where *eating* is among the grand concerns of life, is pretty evident. The high fauces, ragouts, and strange inventions of the pimps of luxury, to provoke the desire of eating beyond the demands of hunger, and the universal readiness of all to partake of such incentives, shew by what beastial appetites we are governed. Thus on one table the four quarters of the globe shall be ransacked for turtle, and ortolans, and spices and desert, at an expence that would have provided for an hundred families of the needy; and, where circumstances forbid such daily indulgence, yet the same temper shews itself. Hath not a feast pleased you; and the prospect of its approach been dwelt upon with delight? When some nice dish was brought on, was not your before palled appetite whetted anew? or did you not regret that it came in so late? Did you never take a pleasure in talking of the good eating you partook of or were going to? Have you never oppressed nature till she sunk under the load? You will need only observe a Sunday Evening's

ing's congregation to discover in it the gluttony of the poor, as much as in the habitual snoring on the soft couch after dinner of such as are daily more luxurious.

The desire of *Drinking*, though perhaps not more common, is yet more taken notice of: What a thirst is there after liquor! The brute beast quenches his drought at the river, and is satisfied; whilst the man who leads him thither drinks beyond reason when nature is no longer thirsty! Hence, at the expence of health and strength and fortune, and every consideration that can be near or dear, we still see the drunkard "filling himself with strong drink"; pouring in liquid fire, that he may thirst and drink, and thirst and drink again. But when men proceed not to these grosser excesses, and fashion or decency, or some such like motive withholds them, the heart still shews its disposition, by the pleasure felt "when the liquor sparkles in the glass and moveth itself aright"; by "sitting long at the cups"; by taking what is called a *cheerful glass*; by customary indulgence after meals, through pretence of I know not what advantage to digestion, &c. and

¹⁵ Prov. xxiii. 31.

and by frequenting *needless* places of public entertainment through pleas of business or company.

These symptoms shew the tendency of the heart where grosser excesses may have been avoided.

Inordinate *love of Sleep* comes under the head of Sloth, long continuance of it belongs to Excess. When a third part of your time or more is spent on your pillow; when a great deal of the day as well as the night is wasted on your bed; when you rise heavy, and not refreshed from your morning or mid-day slumbering; it can hardly be but that irregular appetite must have dominion over you. The body thus indulged is filled with the fuel of lust; and no marvel that it makes so many to be ¹⁵ like fed horses in the ¹⁵ morning, every one neighing after his ¹⁵ neighbour's wife ¹⁶ ¹⁵.

3. *Impurity* is strongly the bent of man's natural heart. I will not enter into the grosser indulgences of it, which modesty bids rather to conceal than mention; but only hint

hint at some of those more unnoticed instances of it, in which many lie the slaves of their vile and wicked hearts, without suspecting the dreadfulneſs of their ſtate. Our fallen nature is full of lewdneſs: we need no other temptation but from within. " Every man " is tempted when he is drawn away of his " own hearts luſts and enticed " ¹⁷ ¹⁸. What corrupt imaginations riſe up in the hearts of all from the days of their youth? How readily are they entertained, indulged, delighted in? eſpecially when *alone* and on the *bed* of Sloth? And where this is the caſe, how ready are you to pleaſe your eyes with ſome inflaming object? How prone to ſeek the ſnare, where you have felt evil deſires excited? and to purſue, inſtead of avoiding the perſons and pleaſures whence Satan hath taken occaſion to entangle you? Theſe are the beginnings of luſt: " Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, " and thence adulteries " ¹⁸ ¹⁹.

The tongue will partake of the defilement that is within. Groſs indecencies in converſation are indeed at preſent in general remitted to the vulgar; but the delicate laſciviousneſs of the more refined ſhews the ſame abominable temper

¹⁷ James i. 14.¹⁸ Matt. xv. 19.

temper in the secret innuendo; the double entendre; and the thin veil of a witty expression suited more surely to insinuate into and fix the vile idea more firmly upon the memory. These "unclean spirits have gone" forth out of your mouth¹⁹", or your fancy hath been entertained with them, you have either smiled approbation, or seemed only pleasingly to frown in silence; at least have not testified your abhorrence of them. Whilst too often, what openly-corrupt conversation goes forward? and, shameful to tell! even the old make the young to blush with their obscenities. The conduct under such an influence must be conformed to the temper.

I will not speak of the more criminal indulgences of the flesh, of the grossest nature; but would have every one of you call to mind the many undue liberties you have taken with any person, because you were alone; the dishonour of God's temple, your own body; the satisfaction and pleasure enjoyed in a loose book of Amours or Plays; or the like obscenities more strikingly expressed on the Stage: the feasting your eyes with an in-

I

decent

¹⁹ Rev. xvi. 13.

decent picture; the allowed, though sinful freedoms so common at Balls and in other mixed companies; and the innumerable ways which the flesh contrives decently to gratify its corrupt desires. Whilst, as the effect of such indulgences, your minds feel the continued impression of them, and your senses, even when locked up in sleep, are still haunted with the image and impure fancies, which were entertained when you were waking.

These are the dire marks of our desperately wicked hearts. Corrupt indeed are we, and become abominable: ¹⁹ "from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in us, but the whole is wounds and bruises and putrifying sores ²⁰". The more we are attentive to what hath passed in us, the more we shall discover this vile nature of ours, and feel the need of crying, ²¹ "Purge me with hyssop, that I may be clean; wash me, that I may be whiter than snow ²²". Yea, and when we have begun to be made whole, ²³ "this war in our members, this flesh that lusteth against the Spirit ²⁴", will require

²⁰ Isai. i. 6.²¹ Psal. li. 7.²² Gal. v. 17.

quire all our labour, watchfulness and prayer, to " keep it under and bring it into subjection ²³ ".

I shall conclude the subject with this one observation.

That the knowledge of this desperate wickedness of our hearts can only come from the Spirit of God, by his Word enlightning our minds to understand our errors: for those who are evidently under the grossest influence of the foregoing evils, and, one should think, must be unavoidably convinced of them, are quite insensible of it. The most worldly hearts are usually the most regardless of their wretched state: and they who are " following all uncleanness with " greediness ", are led blindfold to their ruin, as the adulterers, " who eateth, and wipeth " her mouth, and saith, I have done no " wickedness ²⁴ ". But when God's light shineth into our hearts, then is our darkness revealed to us; conviction of sin flashes like lightning on our consciences: and the more of this light we obtain, the more humbling are our reflections.

I 2

I have

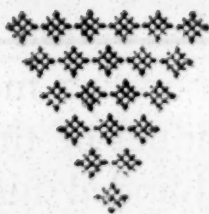
²³ 1 Cor. ix. 27.²⁴ Prov. xxx. 20.

I have pitied the ignorance of a decent Formalist, whose astonishment hath been raised when an experienced Christian hath expressed his deep apprehensions of his own vileness; and the unawakened Devotee hath suspected, from his confessions of the “remembrance” of his sins being grievous to him, and the “burden of them really intolerable*”, that he must needs have been a peculiarly bad man in his time, and committed some atrocious wickedness: whereas the only difference between them is, that the one is enlightened to see and quickened to attend to those workings of natural corruption in his heart and actions; whilst, however more evident they appear in the conduct of the other, yet the “darkness hath blinded his eyes” that he cannot see them. And this it is that makes every true believer really write down under his own name “of finners I am chief”; because the views he hath of his own fallen nature can be equalled by nothing which he discovers in the conduct of others.

If what you have heard hath this blessed humbling effect upon any of your hearts,
my

* Confession in the Communion Service.

my brethren, one great end of my speaking will be answered, and " the revelation of " the gospel of the grace of God in JESUS " CHRIST " will indeed appear precious unto you, concerning which I purpose to speak more fully in the ensuing Discourses.



THE SOUTHERN REVIEW

S E R M O N VI.

The Sovereignty of God's Law.

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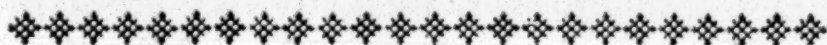
THE SOUTHERN REVIEW
has been a faithful record of all persons
and all ages. The right of the
Gospel has continually continued in
Man's history as a test of whose present
existence must be considered as bearing a ne-
cessary connection with future, and his eter-
nal state is bound to ultimately manifest itself
must be regarded as a [illegible] and
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That he is a [illegible] in [illegible] and as
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S E R M O N VI.

The Spirituality of G O D's Law.



GALATIANS III. 10.

Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

 HE immortality of the Soul hath been a truth received in all nations and all ages. The light of the Gospel hath infallibly confirmed it. Man therefore is a creature, whoſe preſent exiſtence muſt be conſidered as bearing a neceſſary connexion with futurity; and his eternal ſtate, as being ſo infinitely more durable, muſt be regarded by him as unſpeakably more important than his temporal.

That he is a dependent creature, and, as endued with conſcience, accountable to ſome ſuperior Being for his conduct in this life,

hath been also universally received, and cannot now be reasonably disputed; since Revelation hath laid it down among its most evident truths, that "God will judge the world" in righteousness, by that man whom he "hath ordained; of which he hath given" assurance unto all men, in that he hath "raised him from the dead". That then the actions of men shall be laid in the balance of justice, and a suitable sentence follow the inquiry.

If man be thus accountable for his actions, it must arise from some rule of duty prescribed and known: what that Rule is, as well as the sanctions annexed to it, will deserve our attentive consideration.

We are in nothing more liable to mistake than concerning the Law of God, and the penalties annexed to it. Every man naturally desires to be happy. Every one is willing to persuade himself he shall be so. Every man therefore would have such a Rule as shall certainly comprehend himself within it. Hence all the vain labours to lower down the true standard from the perfection of obedience

* Acts xvii. 31.

Serm. 6. *The Spirituality of God's Law.* 121

dience to *sincerity*; and then establishing such measures of sincerity, as vary according to the corrupt taste of those who thus exalt themselves into Legislators.

On the other hand, the sanctions have suffered the same violence as the Law. The dread of eternal misery is terrible indeed. Nature shrinks from it. The language therefore of holy scripture must be explained in some milder sense. Hence the *duration*, the *place*, the *intenseness*, the *universality* of the torments of the wicked, have been respectively and strenuously controverted by those who had too much reason to apprehend the weight of them: whilst from self-wrought notions of God, and leaving the scriptures to wander after airy speculations, others have invented for themselves a wrathless Deity, either too indulgent to punish at all, or afflicting merely to purify, and with a view to bring the whole race of mankind finally and happily from the furnace, when their dross hath been consumed, and the divine principle purged and extricated from the intanglements with which flesh and sense have surrounded it.

Now

Now the only way we can shun the rocks of error is by keeping a constant eye upon the Chart of divine Truth. The God who alone hath a right to our service, hath fully revealed his mind and will relative to these matters in the scriptures, has prescribed the Rule and declared the Sanction. "To the word therefore, and the testimony".

The Apostle, in the Epistle from which the words in the text are taken, is writing to the church of the *Galatians*, on a matter then greatly controverted; namely, "whether it was necessary for the Gentile converts to be circumcised, and to keep the law of *Moses*"²? The judaizing teachers among them had sapped the very foundation of the believers hope, by setting up the law as a covenant of life, and pleading for obedience to it as the intitling ground of their acceptance with God: whilst Saint *Paul* in every place resolutely set himself to oppose an opinion so dishonourable to his Master, so contradictory to the Gospel, and so destructive to mens souls. In this Epistle and another to the *Romans*, he expressly and formally enters into the

² Acts xv. 1—6.

the question, and confutes the pretences of his adversaries, from the consideration of the spirituality, extent and perfection of the law; the impossibility in the present state of human nature of satisfying its demands, and the design and end of it, both as moral and ceremonial; which was not to furnish any with a title to life, but "to lead all to CHRIST, that they might be justified by faith" ³.

So far therefore from being capable of saving, it served only to condemn as many as trusted to it; since "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; as it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" ⁴.

And this reasoning of the Apostle with the people of that day is left upon record "for our admonition", that we like them might not "be turned aside from the hope of the Gospel", to depend on any broken reed which can only run into and pierce the hand that leans upon it. And it is with this view, that I purpose to open the words read to you,
that

³ Gal. iii. 24.

⁴ Gal. iii. 10.

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that when we see the perfection of obedience which God's law, the rule of our duty, indispenfibly requires, and the tremendous curse which it denounces against every transgression, we may be the more solicitous to "fly" from the sword of the avenger to the city "of refuge", the cross of him "who hath" redeemed us from the curse of the law, by "being made a curse for us"⁵. In speaking to the words read at present, I shall endeavour to shew the following particulars:

I. What Law the Apostle here refers to.

II. What the demands of that Law contain.

III. The impossibility of our compliance therewith.

I. The Law the Apostle here refers to, is peculiarly the *moral Law*. He declares it to be that Law "which concluded Jews and Gentiles both under sin"⁶: that Law, by which all the world was found guilty and stood condemned before God⁷: that Law, the offence against which produced *death* before *Moses's* days⁸; and that Law, by obedience to which, wherever it could be found, life would be certainly

⁵ Gal. iii. 13.

⁷ Rom. iii. 19.

⁶ Rom. iii. 9.

⁸ Rom. v. 14.

certainly attained⁹. These are characters which alone suit the moral Law.

Some indeed refer all that the Apostle says to the ceremonial Law, or at least to that dispensation under which the *Jews* were, considered purely as it was Judaical; and thereby make it a private controversy in which the world at present is no ways concerned. But it is evident that the matter in dispute touches the very nerves of the Gospel; namely, whether *faith* or *works* justify us before GOD; and we have full as much concern in it as the *Galatians* themselves. There was a Law from the beginning which man was bound to obey. It was like its Author perfect; coming from GOD it could not but be so: and it was to be suitably observed, he can receive from his creatures no service but such as becomes their dependence upon him; and this must be absolute and intire. This is the eternal and unalterable Rule of duty. The traces of this obligation through man's corruption were become grievously obscured, yet in the worst times "GOD was not without a witness" in the conscience. Men at all times and in all places knew that they who
did

⁹ Gal. iii. 12.

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did things contrary to that Law *were worthy of death*⁹. The *Jews* had one advantage over others: God committed to them his lively Oracles. He wrote with his own finger on tables of stone this eternal law of obedience: and in typical institutions of his own appointment shewed them *deliverance* from its condemnation. It never was designed to save them. It was given that "Sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful"¹⁰; that it might be "a Schoolmaster to them"¹¹; that they might turn their eyes from this Law of works to a Gospel of grace, continually held forth in every bleeding victim. The moral Law delivered to *Moses* on mount *Sinai* was not a new Law, peculiarly framed for and appropriated to them; it was the old commandment which had been from the beginning; a Law by which all mankind was to be judged, and be justified or condemned, according to their obedience to or transgression of it. The peculiar advantages they enjoyed by the Law, were a clearer and deeper conviction of their impotency to keep it, and their misery under the failure; and fuller discoveries of God's
gracious

⁹ Rom. i. 32.

¹⁰ Rom. vii. 13.

¹¹ Gal. iii. 24.

gracious designs of relief from it in the promised seed.

When therefore the Law is spoken of, we must not conceive that the *mosaical* Law, contained in the Ten Commandments, is another law distinct from the *moral*, by which *Jews* or *Gentiles* were otherwise equally bound. There never was but one moral Law from God: there cannot be: it is unalterable. However, in sundry times and divers manners the promulgation of it may be made. All men are and must be under it to the end of the world. God must cease to be, before his law can vary or cease to bind mens consciences.

II. The demands of this Law come next to be considered. And these are obedience in every view and instance absolute and complete; doing God's will on earth as it is done in heaven. "A continuance in all things written in the book of the law". Our Rule of duty is perfect and intire; nor may one jot or tittle of it be broken. "Give me thy heart"¹² in the utmost simplicity and sincerity, is its first injunction; for "God requireth truth in the inward parts"¹³. The principle must be pure. This is essential to all

¹² Prov. xxiii. 26.

¹³ Psal. li. 6.

all obedience. It is the rectitude of the temper which constitutes the acceptableness of the service. The *extent* too of our obedience must be as large as our Rule. *All* God's commandments, the least as well as the greatest of them, demand our submission: and this with the highest intenseness of affection. "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all
 "thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with
 "all thy might, and with all thy strength"¹⁴. Imperfection is transgression. If the least measure of love be wanting, the obedience under the Law is not absolutely perfect. God will have an intire service or none. One defect as effectually destroys all title to life by the Law as a thousand transgressions: and the whole must be *perpetual*; continuance in all these things to do them being the unalterable prescription. The longest course of obedience, *once* interrupted, ceases directly to be a legal righteousness. The curse enters the moment that sin enters. A life of a thousand years, spent like an Angel of God, would, according to the covenant of *works*, lose all its reward, if but in the dying moments a vain thought or an idle word escaped us. The Law is inexorable: "The man
 "that

¹⁴ Matt. xxii. 37.

" that doth those things, he and he only shall
 " live by them ¹⁵ ". It makes no provision for
 failure: " The wages of sin, of every sin, is
 " death ¹⁶ ". Now ¹⁵ if there had been a Law
 " which could have given life, verily righte-
 " ousness should have been by this Law ¹⁷ ".
 Such obedience as this would have given
 a legal claim to life: we should have stood
 before GOD " righteous, as he is righteous ".
 The favour of GOD, not by Grace but by
 right, would have been necessarily connected
 with this: GOD must have been delighted
 with his own image. But,

III. No man hath ever thus conformed to
 the rule of duty. " The scripture hath con-
 " cluded all under sin ¹⁸ ". The Law could
 not be fulfilled through the weakness of the
 flesh: " All have sinned, and come short of
 " the glory of GOD ¹⁹ ". The moment any
 person truly begins to consider his state, and
 to bring forth his heart and life before the
 law of this holy LORD GOD, conviction must
 seal up his lips in silence. Many indeed
 there are, whose ignorance and unhumbléd

K

pride

¹⁵ Rom. x. 5.

¹⁷ Gal. iii. 21.

¹⁹ Rom. iii. 23.

¹⁶ Rom. vi. 23.

¹⁸ Gal. iii. 22.

pride lead them to claim the reward of obedience: and many more hope to deserve it before they die, though the one and the other are under the most fatal delusion. But this will be disputed by the *good* liver, as they think themselves, who trust that they are righteous. It may not therefore be amiss to manifest a little more explicitly the fact of disobedience, and shew you, that so far from keeping all the commandments in the highest measure continually, you have never for one day truly kept any of the commandments in the lowest measure: but having been a transgressor from the womb, you continue so to this hour.

I have indeed already at large laid open to you the "carnal mind which is enmity" against God; and shewn you that it neither is subject to the law of God, nor in deed can be ²⁰. I have proved that every living soul is thus carnal: and as a consequence thereof, that he is essentially a sinner, wanting that principle; without which there can be no obedience.

This

²⁰ Rom. viii. 7.

This alone might be sufficient; but because the matter is of such importance, I pass on to a review of our evident transgressions against the Law, in order more fully to support the charge just laid against us. Though it may startle some to be accused of idolatry, profaneness, sabbath-breaking, murder, adultery, theft and perjury; it is a fact, that you are guilty of all. I might indeed plead your own petitions for mercy, after the rehearsal of each commandment *, and the acknowledgments you are continually making to the same purpose in many other places of our Liturgy: for surely you are not allowing yourselves thus deliberately, solemnly and repeatedly to utter what you deem only so many falsehoods. But I would rather wave this proof, to enter more intimately into the subject, and shew you the ground of such acknowledgments.

It must be observed that "the law of God
"is spiritual"²¹. Our SAVIOUR's comment upon it declares how far it reaches. Each

K 2

command

* *Rubric* before the Commandments in the Communion Service.

²¹ Rom. vii. 14.

command comprehends under it not only outward acts but inward, yea, and every intention or thought that hath either a more immediate or distant tendency to violate it.

The Law begins with the *object* of worship and the nature of it: who is the true God, and how he must be served. God alone must be the object of our worship. We are called upon to have *no other*; and to worship him, is to pay to him that supreme regard, that faith and fear and love, which we may not give to any other. Now who hath thus sanctified the LORD God in his heart? What have we been doing but setting up against him so many idols of jealousy? It matters not whether we have made to us "gods of wood and stone, which are no gods"; or put in the fine gold, with *Cæsar's* image upon it, our confidence: whether we have worshipped at the shrine of a deceased or perhaps imaginary *Venus*, or supremely fixed our affections upon some living object; whether we have cried "*Baal*, help us"; or fled to creature-dependences: whether we have with the *Americans* sacrificed to devils, or feared the faces of men; wherever or in whatever we have loved, feared and trusted upon the creature

creature more than the Creator, there we have had other gods beside him.

As God alone must be worshipped, the nature of that worship next claims our attention. He must be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and in ways only of his own appointment. We are equally guilty of idolatry in worshipping the true God after a wrong manner, as if we worshipped a false god. When the *Israelites* "proclaimed a feast unto the LORD" before the golden calf, they were as much idolaters as when "they erected the tabernacle of *Moloch* and the star of their god *Rempban*". Images with us are no longer the mediums of worship. I will suppose you never bowed to them, nor have been tempted to do so; but are you therefore wholly free from Idolatry? Can we find no idolaters but in the deserts of *Afric*, among those who prostrate themselves before the rising moon? or must we travel to the distant East to behold the bending votaries of a *Chinese* pagod? Are they alone in this respect culpable, who in the country of grossly idolatrous *Romanism* bow the knee to a god which the Baker hath made, or adore the dead bones of a man? Alas! I fear there is

not a Protestant church in the world where as great idolatry almost is not in the worshippers; not to mention the misconceptions which are usually entertained of God, and that aptness to frame corporeal ideas of the infinitely incomprehensible nature: I would only beg you to observe the temper and manner in which God's worship is performed among us; and you will needs confess, that it better suits a dumb idol, that "having eyes
 " seeth not, and having ears heareth not"; than the all-seeing, heart-searching JEHOVAH. Some indeed there are who are worse than idolaters: they worshipped some god, though a false one; but your neglect of God's worship in public, in your families, and in private, testifies with what contempt you treat the great God and SAVIOUR, "in whom you
 " live, and move, and have your being"²². You have risen up, and he hath sustained you; you have lain down in peace, because he has preserved you; but hath he seen a bended knee, a grateful acknowledgment of his care, or a petition for its continuance? Not a word. You have left him "far above
 " out of your sight"; you "restrained prayer
 " before him"²³. Is he a God, or is he not,

²² Acts xvii. 28.²³ Job xv. 4.

not, that you have treated him with such neglect?

But you daily worship him. How? "in spirit and in truth"? What, when so many vain thoughts, so many worldly thoughts, so many wicked thoughts, lodge within you? Is this a worship in spirit and in truth? What, when you are so unsuitably affected with his glory, so irreverent, cold, unmeaning and hypocritical, "drawing near to him with your lips, when your heart is far from him"²⁴? Is this the worship he demands? Go wait upon the meanest person you would ask a favour of; you dare not treat such, as you have many a time treated the eternal Majesty.

You are commanded to "sanctify that great and terrible name, The Lord thy God"²⁵. But how often hath this tremendous name been in your mouth vainly, wantonly, thoughtlessly, profanely, or passionately? Were the charge only brought against you for your mentioning it so often in your prayers, when your heart hath felt no awe of his presence and glory, you would

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²⁴ Ifai xxix. 13. Matt. xv. 8.

²⁵ Ifai. viii. 13.

see a catalogue of sins that would increase beyond the number of the hairs of your head.

Your sabbaths have been greatly polluted. That holy day hath been sometimes a burden to you. ²⁷ You have said, When will it be gone ²⁸? Yea, you have not waited for its end. You have thought your own thoughts, ²⁹ spoke your own words, and done your own ³⁰ pleasure in it ³¹. You have neglected the public worship often on the most frivolous pretexts. You have attended, but without any reverential sense of him whose throne is in heaven, and his footstool the earth. You have gone away, but not in a sabbatical temper. Indulgence, idleness, dress, visitings or worse, have profaned that perhaps more than any common days. Your man-servant or maid-servant have been detained from the service of God: you have sacrilegiously converted God's right in them on that day to your own secular purposes.

Upon these facts I appeal to your respective consciences, who is guiltless in any instance of the breach of his duty towards God? Nor shall we be able to give a better account
of

²⁷ Amos viii. 5.

²⁸ Isai. lviii. 13.

of our obedience to the duties of the second Table.

The proud and naturally independent heart of man will not, as hath been shewn before, easily bend to "give honour to whom honour is due"²⁹. Contempt of authority, disobedience to superiors, ingratitude to parents, exalting ourselves above our equals, and haughtiness towards inferiors, have in innumerable instances appeared.

But *Murder* you never committed, no not in thought. Do not be too confident: somebody perhaps is now alive, whom you have wished to be dead; or some one hath died, whose death rejoiced you. Was not this Murder, think ye? Suppose you have not proceeded to the act of imbruing your hands in innocent blood (yet perhaps you may have contributed to *this*, and been a party if not a principal many ways in bringing on the untimely end) have you never been "angry" without a cause? Never been heated to say, "Raca, or thou fool"? Never "hated your brother"? He who knows best his own commands, expressly charges these things to the account of *Murder*³⁰.

Adultery

²⁹ Rom. xiii. 7.

³⁰ Matt. v. 22. 1 John iii. 15.

Adultery also you will not confess. Why? because you were never *taken*, as the woman brought to our blessed LORD, "in the very act"³¹. What of that? Say you have been really innocent of the grosser crime, have you never "looked upon a woman to lust after her"? Hath your hand, your tongue, your eye, never betrayed the unhallowed passion? Hath not your heart entertained contrivances to effect your gratification? or indulged desires of doing it, if in your power? Then you have certainly been an *Adulterer*³². Add the instances noted before under the temper of Impurity, and tell me if you can say, "I am pure from this sin"?

It is ignominious to be a *Thief*: you will not acknowledge yourself to be subject to that imputation. But then hath not pride rather than duty kept you within bounds? And hath not Self often passed the line of justice, and adjudged to you what was not properly your own? Have you always "done unto others as you would in a change of circumstances have expected from them"? The love of gain, hath it not often blinded your eyes, and covetousness laid a bias on your

³¹ John viii. 4.³² Matt. v. 21, 22.

your integrity? In your dealings, labour, service, or whatever your respective employments may have been, when you begin to place things in the true point of view, you will see how fwerving your walk hath been from the rule of right. Unjust gains, exorbitant profits, faulty or eye-service, impositions in merchandise, advantages taken of others easiness, ignorance or necessities, with a thousand means which worldly wisdom hath devised to carry on its grand design of *getting* and *thriving*, testify the Thief in the heart. Besides the numberless acts of injustice to God, the *King*, and the *necessitous*, which have not, it may be, ever come under your own cognisance or consideration, or been a subject of the least concern.

I will suppose you never to have *perjured* yourself before a magistrate, nor to have suborned others; but you may be "a false
" witness against your neighbour " notwithstanding. The tongue that never told a lie, would be a wonder which this world never produced: he only excepted "in whose mouth
" there was no guile"³³. The designing lie, the pernicious, the exculpativè, the marvelous,
or

³³ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

or the jocular, hath often, I fear, found a place in all our conversations. Who is wholly guiltless of slander, passing rash judgment upon others, of misrepresentation or of misreport? "The tongue is a world of iniquity"³⁴. He would be a "perfect man" indeed who could bridle it³⁵.

The concupiscence forbidden in the last place goes to the bottom of the heart, reaching the very first motions of sinful inclination towards the things of others. If we have offended in the rest but little, we shall be found herein to have offended much. For who hath not been conscious to numberless motions of concupiscence, which have scarce been formed into desire, and have never been brought into act?

These are the "transgressions and disobedience", which are threatned with "a just recompence of reward"³⁶. The rule is before you. Try your conduct: can it stand this test? Guilty or Not Guilty, is the question. Who must not lay their hand upon their mouth? We have sinned. The fact is undeniable. Indeed what else have we done but

³⁴ James iii. 6.³⁵ James iii. 2.³⁶ Heb. ii. 2.

but sinned? What one of the commandments have we kept? And so far from continuance in them all, what one day, yea what one hour of our lives ever passed, without some deviation from them? What then can the Law do? it must condemn us; it must ³⁵ conclude all ³⁶ under sin, and the sentence of death eternal pass upon them, forasmuch as all have ³⁷ sinned ³⁸. But is every man under this state of condemnation? Yes; ³⁹ The whole ⁴⁰ world is guilty before GOD ⁴¹. Is there then no plea? Yes, *Guilty*. But can we not escape the curse? No, not by the Law. Must we then lie down despairing? Certainly: for any thing we can do to help ourselves. ⁴² The Law is the ministration of death ⁴³. It is and can be in its nature no other. It is our only and eternal rule of duty, and we must keep it or perish, for any relief we can obtain from ourselves. I rest here to intimate,

First, The deplorable state of fallen man under a Covenant of Works. He is rolling up a stone which is above his strength, and continually returns and crushes him. ⁴⁴ By ⁴⁵ the

³⁷ Gal. iii. 22. Rom. v. 12.

³⁸ Rom. iii. 19.

³⁹ 2 Cor. iii. 7.

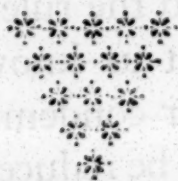
"the Law is the knowledge of sin"⁴⁰. Yea, "the strength of sin is the Law"⁴¹. And yet we are so strangely wedded to it, that we are continuing our impotent attempts to keep it, though the seamless garment of righteousness once rent can never be renewed by us, so as to cover our nakedness. It was the old leaven the devil infused, and it is still working to make man seek his salvation by the works of the Law. He knows his power is never so triumphant, and his captive so secure, as when this is the case. It was, I doubt not, on this very account that our LORD said, that "publicans and harlots entred into the kingdom of heaven", whilst the apparent "children of the kingdom", the devout, regular, self-justifying dependers on the exactness of their conformity to the rule of duty, "were cast out"⁴². Let us know ourselves, and lie down under our condemnation. To feel our misery, and to be reduced to self-despair, is to be at the gate of mercy.

Secondly, What an act of astonishing grace is it, that GOD hath made another Covenant with us, "established on better promises"⁴³; wherein

⁴⁰ Rom. iii. 20.⁴¹ 1 Cor. xv. 56.⁴² Matt. xxi. 31.—viii. 12.⁴³ Heb. viii. 6.

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wherein whilst the Law is magnified by the obedience unto death of God's own Son, pardon and grace are purchased for us, and eternal redemption secured from all the destructive evils which a broken law denounces. A Covenant of Grace will be indeed "as
"fountains of waters, and streams from *Lebanon*", to every soul that sees his natural obligations, and his violation of them. I hope we shall ever keep this Covenant in our view; by and by, through Grace, I may be enabled to open to you its riches and fulness.



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S E R M O N VII.

The Penalty of Disobedience.



GALATIANS III. 10.

Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

THE functions of the divine Law
T ſucceed in order to the Law itſelf.
Unless enforced by penalties it would
be like a beardless arrow. The great
Legiſlator hath therefore ſolemnly denounced
them: His power is all-ſufficient to fulfil
them: His holineſs requires it: His truth
obliges him. The account given of the rule
of our obedience is ſuch as may juſtly alarm
us. Our tranſgreſſions of it are numberleſs,
great and aggravated. The Law hath found
us guilty. Juſtice muſt take its courſe. "Every
" tranſgreſſion and diſobedience muſt receive
" a juſt recompence of reward: Curſed is
" every one that continueth not in all things

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" which

" which are written in the book of the law to
 " do them ".

There is nothing we are more averse to receive than God's declared determination to punish sin. As every man wishes for happiness, he would quiet his fears with promises of peace, " though God hath said, " There is no peace ¹ ". The curse of God is ever-terrifying thunder in a sinner's ears. He turns away from it. He would soften the tone of vengeance. He would make a new Deity, all mercy, to overlook the dishonour cast upon his holy law, and out of complaisance to him fullying the beauty of his holiness, and falsifying his truth. But " let " God be true, and every man a liar ². He " hath spoken, and who shall disannul it ? " He is in one mind, and who shall turn him " back ³ " ? Better, far better, is it for us to bow at present before his unchangeable Law, and trembling at the sanction, fly to the only door of hope, than, trusting on lying vanities, be covered with confusion, " when " the devouring storm shall come, and sweep " away every refuge of lies ⁴ : when he shall " rain

¹ Isai. xlvi. 22.

² Rom. iii. 4.

³ Isai. xiv. 27. Job xxiii. 13.

⁴ Isai. xxviii. 17.

^{ss} rain upon the ungodly, snares, fire and
^{ss} brimstone, storm and tempest, this shall be
^{ss} their portion to drink ^{5 ss}.

I am about to open to you, my brethren, the curse and ^{ss} wrath of GOD revealed against ^{ss} all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of ^{ss} men ^{6 ss}. A subject we are most interestedly concerned in; forasmuch as this unrighteousness is found in every soul of us; before GOD's Bar can ^{ss} no man living be justified ^{7 ss}. May the awful terror of GOD's judgments force us to take refuge in the arms of HIS Grace, under the shadow of whose wings we may be safe; where no deluge of wrath, no devouring scourge, no curse can reach us.

I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. That in the natural course of things the curse of GOD's broken Law must fall upon every sinner's head.
- II. The dreadfulnefs of that curse: and,
- III. Add a word of Application.

I. In the primary natural course of things, the curse of a broken Law must fall upon

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every

⁵ Psal. xi. 6.

⁶ Rom. i. 18.

⁷ Psal. cxliii. 2.

every sinner's head. That we are all sinners is proved. As sinners, wrath is due to us and pronounced against us. Can we escape it, is the question. By no powers of our own is it possible: sin once committed cannot be undone. By two ways men usually seek to escape the wages of sin. "By sorrow for the past, and doing better for the time to come." But neither of these can heal the breach.

(1.) *Sorrow* for the past will not cancel the obligation to suffer the punishment of transgression. This is the first *refuge of lies* to which proud man betakes himself. But what will this avail? Will fountains of tears, day and night, wash out the stains from our Conscience, or blot out our sin from God's book? They can no more stop the course of God's Law than the cries of the criminal who is convicted for murder, or the tears of the debtor who is arrested for his extravagancies, can stay the execution of human justice. Besides, what is the cause of most of this sorrow? Is it any thing more than a selfish fear of deserved punishment? And can this be any compensation for the dishonour shewn to God's Laws? But be it what it will, the divine Law knows no language,
but

but "pay me what thou owest"; and in default thereof, delivers over to the tormentors. God's word is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"⁸. Every sinner is a convict in law. The sentence only remains to be passed, and then execution will be made upon every attainted soul.

But, (2.) We generally place greater hopes on our doing better for *the time to come*. This usually goes by the name of *true repentance*; a little sorrow for the past, and a good resolution for the future: but alas! this is as vain and fruitless as the other.

Suppose yourself as good as your word. Suppose you really could do what you say, could turn from every evil way, and live henceforth as pure as an angel? Would that secure you? Alas! your present and future obedience would be no more than the Law required. You would be "an unprofitable servant, doing no more than was your duty to do"⁹. You would have nothing over. Your past offence must remain as before: and it must therefore render all your subsequent services in vain. You would not, it

L 3 is

⁸ Ezek. xviii. 4.

⁹ Luke xvii. 10.

is true, be condemned for present iniquity ; but what would that avail, if still you must answer for the past ? Tell your creditor, you are determined to run no more in arrear, will he give you a receipt in full on that condition ? You see then, even on this supposition, sin once committed becomes indelible by you.

But the supposition you can thus do better, and the promise of doing so are chimerical. Were you to hear a man, who after repeated essays never yet was able to finish one wheel or part of one, engaging to complete some grand and curious machine, on any penalty which might be inflicted ; I know not whether you would blame most his ignorance or his arrogance : yet not so great as yours, who resolve upon perfect obedience to God, after such frequent experience of inability to keep one of his commandments. Until you can cease to be a corrupted creature, you cannot cease to transgress ; and if so, what I pray you, can your future conduct be but a sequel to the past, adding sin unto sin ? and will a corrupt walk now atone for the same before ?

But will not both these together, *sorrow for the past, and sincere though imperfect obedience*

dience for the time to come, avail for me with GOD? Will he not be pleased if I do my best? I answer, You neither do the best you can, and that best is bad too.

You do not the *best* you can. Who will dare to say that he doth really keep every one of GOD's commandments to the uttermost of what he might have done? Let any man but reflect upon his conduct one day, and see whether he hath not done things which he ought and might not have done; and left undone what he might have accomplished, for the glory of GOD and for the good of his neighbour. We could no more stand the plea of doing our *best*, than of obeying in *perfection*.

But after we had really done our best we should only have increased our condemnation: for what is our best, our very righteousnesses? Are they capable to stand the severity of GOD's judgments? Can they appear before the holy Law of GOD? Will they challenge the rewards of obedience? So far from it, that the very iniquity of our holiest things must have one to bear it, or we are undone. And why? because the corruption of our na-

ture defileth all we do. The best deeds of the natural man are wholly unclean, have not a spark of spiritual goodness in them. "For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean¹⁰?" whilst the heart of a renewed man being so but in part, enough of defilement mixes in his best duties, to render them incapable of bearing the scrutiny of the Law of God*.

The consequence then is, that if we stand on the footing of our own obedience to the rule of our duty, we fall inevitably under the curse; nor can any method we can devise or make use of enable us to escape its execution. We must suffer or perform. The latter is impossible, therefore the former must be our portion. Which leads me,

II. To consider what is the import of the threatening God hath declared against the transgressor, or the dreadfulness of the curse denounced. The security of sinners arises from a disbelief or misapprehension of the real wages of sin. Nor is there a soul who is saved from the curse of the Law, but would look upon sin in a more hateful light, if he really and fully apprehended the wrath revealed against it.

I will

¹⁰ Job xiv. 4.

* See Article XII. and XIII.

I will wave at this time the numberless evils that are the present wages of sin; though these might fill volumes. The pains, the diseases, the calamities, the afflictions, the misery and distresses, which in this present time are the portion of the sinner; and death itself, the last and most dreaded of all. We may be assured from what we already see and feel, that "it is a fearful thing indeed" to fall finally into the hands of the living "God". If these are but "the beginning of sorrows", what must the fulness and completion of them be?

I would pause a moment, that solemn awe might fix upon every mind, when we are entering on a subject so tremendous. It is what you and I, my brethren, have the most deep and intimate concern in. We are the sinners to whom the wages of sin are due. One transgression only deserves this wrath; what will it then be, when sinners have filled up the measure of their iniquities, and as the sand of the sea their transgressions are numberless? O! for a heart of flesh to tremble for others and for ourselves.

If

If any scorers hear or peruse these lines, I shall expect to be called uncharitable, or a melancholy Enthusiast, and they will feel their heart provoked "to kick against the "pricks". But, Sinner, know that these are the true sayings of GOD. Thou must deny his Word before thou canst reject these terrors. They are now declared with the kindest intention to thy soul, to press thee to "fly from the wrath to come". And fly thou must or perish in the flames. O that thou mightest feel, before it is too late to flee! and that all would hasten their pace to the mountain of refuge, lest the storm overtake them.

"God will visit for these things". He hath solemnly warned us that sin shall not go unpunished. And a punishment he hath assigned adequate to its high demerit; becoming the Majesty offended by it.

God himself will punish. "And who can stand when he is angry? If his wrath be kindled, yea, but for a moment, who may abide it"¹²? He is a consuming fire", able to

¹² Heb. x. 31. Psal. lxxvi. 7.—ii. 12. Nahum i. 6.

to punish as well as to bless to the uttermost. And what a fearful state must that be, when he arises to vindicate the honour of his broken Law, and to pour out the vials of ^{ss} indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on ^{ss} every soul that doth evil ^{13 ss}?

The scripture hath briefly informed us concerning the nature, place and endurance of the curse of sin. Not the fulness; for who but they that feel can tell the fierceness of the fire, or the intolerableness of the pains? And yet the very sound is enough to make the heart of every one that heareth it to tremble.

^{ss} *Tophet* is ordained of old ^{14 ss}. The place originally designed for the devil and his angels, is now become the habitation of sinful men; even thine, O sinner. ^{ss} God hath prepared it ^{15 ss}. It is ^{ss} a place of torment ^{16 ss}. They that dwell there ^{ss} have no rest day nor ^{ss} night ^{17 ss}. The chains of darkness surround them. They dwell in the shadow of death. ^{ss} A furnace of unquenchable fire; a ^{ss} lake which burneth with sulphur; a stream ^{ss} of

¹³ Rom. ii. 9.

¹⁴ Isai. xxx. 33.

¹⁵ Matt. xxv. 41.

¹⁶ Luke xvi. 28.

¹⁷ Rev. xiv. 11.

" of living flames fed by the breath of the Almighty ¹⁸ ". These are the dreadful images under which God's word reveals to us the prison of hell.

The nature of the torments inflicted therein is, according to our nature, twofold. He that taketh vengeance, punisheth " soul and " body in hell ¹⁹ ".

The Soul in every faculty will feel the tormenting plague. The *Curse* of God will fasten upon it, and it will be " a worm that " never dies ". Every reflection on the past will be like a scorpion's sting that striketh to the heart. Every thought sent out to take a survey of the future, will return filled with black despair, overwhelming with anguish. The consciousness of the immediate displeasure of the eternal God, will be " a poisoned " arrow that drinketh up the spirit "; and the storms of wrath continually apprehended will fill the soul with terrors unspeakable: whilst all the furious passions let loose upon the poor distracted sinner; anger, malice, impatience, rage, like so many boisterous winds upon the sea, contend and toss the soul from one abyss of woe unto another.

The

¹⁸ Isai. xxx. 33.

¹⁹ Matt. x. 28.

The Body, a principal in sin, will also share in the curse. It will lie weltring in flames consuming, yet unconsumed : tormented, without " one drop of water to cool " the raging fire ²⁰ ". For that the fire shall be real and eternal, the scripture seems abundantly to affirm. Nor do I see why it should be incredible, that he who raises the body, should be able to preserve it unconsumed in such a kind of suffering : or that it would at all suit the frequent assertion of the body's being " cast into hell ", if the soul alone was the sufferer. That our bodies will be spiritual is certain; but he that inflicts the punishment can prepare a fire, whose subtilty shall affect not our natures only, but also the angelical. And I doubt not but " the fire " prepared for the devil and his angels", to which the accursed sinner will be condemned, will torment them as well as him.

Moreover, that the anguish will be intolerable, very fully appears from those dismal expressions of it, which fill the horrid caverns of *Tophet*. There ceaseless weeping, remediless sorrows, revengeful but impotent blasphemies, " gnashing of teeth, and gnawing " their

²⁰ Luke xvi. 24.

" their tongues for pain", are heard on every side. " Filled with the fury of the LORD, as " a wild bull in the net "²¹ ", they rore out in their pangs ; and shriek echoes to shriek around. Then shall the most dreaded of all present evils be courted as a friend ; " men " shall seek Death, and shall not find it. " They shall desire to die, and Death shall " flee from them "²² ". O fearful state of wretchedness, where the very arms of Death are pleasant ! With what horror then should we regard each sin, that bringeth down both Body and Soul to such intolerable woe ?

No mitigation or relief is there known or may be hoped for. Every object that could soothe the pains is removed. The voice of mirth, the songs of vanity, the business, the companions, the amusements, that often here lulled to sleep the awakened conscience, are no more found. Sinners are left naked to their sorrows ; and these roll on like billow upon billow without ceasing : " They " have no rest day nor night "²³ " : nay, they do not hope for any. No gleam of that sweet comforter ever breaks through the outer darkness. The Hell of Hells is this ;
that

²¹ Isai. li. 20.²² Rev. ix. 6.²³ Rev. xiv. 11.

that what the sinner is, he must *for ever* be. Until God ceases to be, he cannot cease to hate sin, nor hating to punish it.

Eternity is the only measure of suffering the wages of sin. Could any message reach the damned, that after millions of ages, more than are drops in the ocean, sands on the shore, stars in the firmament, atoms in the universe, or numbers in calculation, that then their torment should cease; surely they would in their chains leap for joy, and endure because there was hope in the end. But alas! when all these ages shall be at an end, their torments are as new as ever; it is still "but the beginning of sorrows". What an alarming thought! when one spark from the furnace, one pang of remorse is now so painful, so grievous; what must eternity be in never-ending torment!

No marvel the sinner's heart rises against so fearful an expectation, and fain would soften down and explain away the duration of eternal misery: but it stands on the firm basis of eternal truth. We must believe this or believe nothing: All God's word sinks with it.

It

It is allowed indeed, the word *for ever* implies sometimes in scripture only a limited duration, which is always determined by the nature of the subject, or something connected immediately with it; but here it is so determined by its very connexion as to be incapable of such a sense. The punishment of the sinner is expressed as of the same duration as the "life of the righteous"²⁴. The torments of wicked men are declared to be as enduring as those of the devils themselves; and I conceive it could never be said of any sinner, "it was good for him never to have been born"²⁵; if after any continuance of suffering, there should finally remain for him an eternity of bliss; seeing all the possible computations of time vanish into nothing, when placed against *eternity*, and are lost as a drop in the ocean. Nor is there the least intimation given throughout the whole book of GOD, that the wages of sin shall ever be paid but by the infliction and continuance of the punishment.

Such is the curse of GOD revealed against sin. Would GOD it might so deeply affect our hearts, as really to beget in us the most awakened

²⁴ Matt. xxv. 46.²⁵ Mark xiv. 21.

awakened concern about our sins. For which end,

III. I shall endeavour to enforce the matter still farther upon every man's conscience for conviction and humiliation.

First, Tell me, daring finner, can thy heart endure, and thy hands be strong, when God shall thus deal with thee? What rock or mountain shall cover thee from this curse of sin, when the great day of God's wrath is come? Perhaps thou hast often despised these terrors of the LORD, and hast been of those "fools who make a mock at sin"²⁶; but know assuredly thy shadow, when the sun shines on thee, doth not follow thee so close as the curse of God perpetually doth. It is upon thee rising up and lying down, going out and coming in; and thou art living, thou art dying under it: and dying, it may be, utterly unconcerned about it. Hadst thou been by when *Shadrach* and his brethren were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace, would not the sight have dismayed thee? Hadst thou had the power to rescue them, what

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would

²⁶ Prov. xiv. 9.

would not humanity have caused thee to attempt? Yet they were safe in the protection of their God. If the fire had not been restrained, their bodies only for a moment could endure the pain, and then an eternity of bliss had received them. But thou art on the brink of a fiercer furnace of fire: and God thy enemy, and an eternity of misery before thee; and art thou not concerned about thine own life, thy eternal life? What infatuation hath seized thee, that thou art so insensible? Canst thou contend with the Almighty JEHOVAH? "Hast thou an arm like GOD²⁷"? Canst thou resist his determinations, or elude his judgment? Dost thou fear when the forked lightning's glare flashes into thy chamber, or tremble when the thunder of God's power bursts from the cloud and rocks the ground? And how canst thou then look forward, so unconcerned, to that dread hour when the Judge "shall be revealed in flaming fire²⁸"; when the heavens shall "be wrapped together as a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat²⁹"; the earth be shook from its foundations, and be dissolved; and all created

²⁷ Job xl. 9.²⁸ 2 Theff. i. 7, 8.²⁹ Isai. xxxiv. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

created nature sink around thee in one promiscuous ruin?

Or wilt thou make him a liar, and his speech of none effect? "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good³⁰?" To indulge thee in thy sins, will he dishonour his faithfulness, forfeit his justice, and deny himself? Surely "the hope of the sinner is as the spider's web"³¹. But are not these, say you, the phantoms which Priestcraft hath invented to over-awe the minds of the superstitious? No, sinner; thou wilt find these are dreadful realities; too true for thee: and if not believed in time, thou wilt be made to feel what now thou affectest to despise. But the curse delays. The up-lifted arm of vengeance is suspended. The collected wrath yet waits a moment. The warning voice is heard. Sinner, arise, tremble; look upwards. See with an eye of faith that sign, that bloody sign. Pardon and peace await thee beneath the banner of the cross. O that thy heart felt thy sin and ruin inevitable; and sought, whilst yet he might be found, that Jesus who can alone deliver

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from

³⁰ Numb. xxiii. 19.

³¹ Job viii. 14.

from the wrath to come. Under his shadow thou mayst be safe. He will interpose his own body between thee and the curse of GOD: and there thou mayst yet be hid in the day of GOD's fierce anger. His deep wounds afford a safe retreat: his heart is opened for thee, that there thou mayst be covered from the descending storm. O that under his wings thou mayst be gathered before the trump of judgment awakes, and Time is no longer!

Secondly, Beware of seeking help from the destroyer. "The strength of sin is the Law"³². Seek not to this for healing. More perish not by negligence than by error. We naturally seek to fly the curse by flying to the Law. Pride ever weds us to it. We think still to make our foe our friend: but ever must the curse remain, whilst by the works of the Law we seek acceptance with GOD: yea, never so sure remain as when we fancy it is removed thereby. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves"³³. If we say, "by works of righteousness which I have done", I shall be saved, verily we have "a lie in our right hand". We must be dead

³² 1 Cor. xv. 56.³³ 1 John i. 8.

dead to the Law. We must expect no more to escape wrath by it, than by rushing upon the sword of our enemy. We have not kept it. We cannot keep it. We are cursed by it. We are undone by it for ever. We must know ourselves to be so. We must feel ourselves ungodly. We must know that we have no strength to be otherwise. We must lie down and say that we have sinned. We must despair for ever of ourselves. One sin brings us to this state. But whose sins are not innumerable? Beware of all dependence then on your own doings. Your sorrow, your amendment, your promises, your endeavours, your sincerity, or whatever else; these cannot save you. They must be utterly renounced; they are incapable of removing your guilt, or obtaining God's favour. Your case for any thing you can do is helpless and hopeless; to see it to be so is the very way to help and hope. For then,

Thirdly, There is deliverance at hand. The lost and the desperate need never perish for want of help. The SON of GOD is come on purpose to seek them. "He hath redeemed us from the curse of
"the Law, by being made a curse for

us³⁴. What we could never do he hath done for us. He hath become the sinner's surety. The Law hath been put in force against him. He hath stood trial in our name and character. He hath taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself³⁵. Sin is everlastingly condemned in the flesh³⁶, by the sufferings of the SON OF GOD. The Law hath no more demands upon CHRIST. He died for sin once. The curse is endured. There is no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS³⁷; for he is risen again; it is plain thereby he hath obtained a legal discharge. Death hath no more dominion over him, for he hath put an end to wrath: All is finished. What a hope is this! A door of mercy is opened for sinners! O who will not crowd into it? With what urgency should we press to him? Guilt is confessed; the Law hath decided; the executioner is at our heels. O! blessed JESUS, hear, help, save us, dying sinners! We fly to thee, for elsewhere help and hope we find not! Open to us; LORD, open to us the door of safety! Open thy heart which once bled for us. Hide us in the cleft of this rock!

³⁴ Gal. iii. 13.³⁵ Heb. ix. 26.³⁶ Rom. viii. 3.³⁷ Rom. viii. 1.

rock! Then shall we at a distance only hear the thunders roll, safe from fear of evil. Where no Law reaches, no wrath descends, no curse seizes the helpless criminal: but Pardon, Peace, Redemption, Glory, are the blessings freely bestowed upon the chief of sinners!





S E R M O N VIII.

Redemption by JESUS CHRIST.



GALATIANS III. 13.

CHRIST *hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.*

* ❧ * **W** HILST man affects to be "wise
* ❧ * "above what is written", the Gos-
* ❧ * pel of JESUS must expect an unfavourable reception. At Reason's tribunal, truths, because incomprehensible, are counted absurd; and it is sufficient to stamp them as folly, because they cannot be fully understood. Yet such are the grand truths of Christianity: too deep for this shallow line to fathom; and simply resolvable into the authority and veracity of Him who hath revealed them. "Whoever therefore will be truly wise, must become a fool that he may be wise".

That

That the eternal GOD should stoop to be incarnate; that he, whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, should lie hid in the womb of a Virgin; that he, "who bindeth the deep in swadling bands"¹, should himself be wrapped in swadling clothes and laid in a manger; that he, who is the Ancient of days, should be born an Infant; that he, who is "the everlasting Father", should be a Virgin's Child; that he, who is in himself "exalted above all blessing and praise", should become "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; that he, whose nature is impassive, should agonize in the garden and bleed under the scourge; that he, "who only hath immortality", should "become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"; that he, who is the most High and most Holy, should be made an *accursed* thing, suffering as the vilest of malefactors, and the most infamous of mankind: these are Mysteries, after which Reason gropes in vain, whilst Faith assents, admires and adores. Mysteries, which to dispute were the same as to disbelieve, and to disbelieve is to be undone: for "he that believeth not shall be damned"².

The

¹ Job xxxviii. 9.² Mark xvi. 16.

The arguments proposed in the foregoing Discourses, have, I trust, served to convince as many as have seriously weighed their force, that our state at present, by nature and practice, is desperate; that we are corrupt in our original, sinful in all our ways, incapable of helping ourselves, concluded under the curse, the wages of sin. "Wretched man, that I am", must every soul needs cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death"? And the answer to this question is the highest glory of the Gospel: "CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us".

This delightful subject, my brethren, it is always the very joy of my heart to set before you. It is the foundation of all my own happiness; it must be so too of yours, if you would be ever happy. It is here alone we can truly find deliverance from our fears, peace from the accusations of conscience, comfort in death, and after death Life everlasting. If we think we have any of these on any other grounds, the thought is at present delusive, and in the end will be fatal. O that God would assist me worthily to speak of the Revelation

³ Rom. vii. 24.

velation of his Grace in JESUS CHRIST, and to shew the fulness that is in him ! The words read will afford these three considerations :

I. The person who hath redeemed us, CHRIST.

II. The manner in which he redeemed us, by being made a curse for us.

III. The benefits which we receive by his redemption of us.

I. The person who hath redeemed us is CHRIST. The comfort and relief of the sinner depends on the all-sufficiency of the Redeemer : the all-sufficiency of the Redeemer must arise from his qualifications for the work he undertakes. CHRIST is thus all-sufficient from the dignity of his divine, and the excellence of his human nature. He is both " GOD and man, very GOD and very man ; " and yet not two, but one CHRIST *."

First, Our Redeemer is *very* GOD. This is the corner-stone of our salvation. If CHRIST be not *very* GOD, " our hopes are vain, " we are yet in our sins ". This however is opposed by many, who deny the " LORD that " bought

* Athanasian Creed.

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" bought them ". They blaspheme that holy Name whereby we are called : they degrade him to a dependent, some farther, to a mere human creature. They thus " live without " the true God in the world ⁴ " ; by such denial of the faith they raze the foundations of Christianity, though they pretend to espouse it, and are worse than the open Infidel.

Let us hear the word of God. There we shall find that either there is no God, or CHRIST is that God : for all his names, his attributes, his works and worship are ascribed to him. These are honours God cannot give unto another. The possessor of them must share in the essence of the divine nature, or we must sink once more into idolatrous polytheism. This truth hath been evidently proved at large by many zealous " contenders " for the faith once delivered unto the saints ⁵ ; and therefore I shall only leave with you the Scriptures which chiefly speak to the point, with a short observation or two upon them.

That CHRIST is *very* God, the *titles* variously ascribed to him declare. Sometimes absolutely he is called God ⁵, sometimes *the* LORD ;

⁴ Ephes. ii. 12.

⁵ Acts xx. 28.

LORD⁶; distinguished too with the peculiar properties of Deity, "the LORD of hosts and "of glory"⁷; sometimes by that incommunicable name JEHOVAH⁸. And these titles so especially his own, that he is said to be "the true God"⁹, the only wise God¹⁰; the "God over all"¹¹, blessed for ever". Could such names be attributed to any creature, we must for ever be at a loss to know the peculiar name of HIM, to whom we owe our adorations. But these are the distinguishing titles of the Deity, therefore he who possesses them is *very* God.

His *attributes* are as decisive a proof of his divinity as his names. They are the incommunicable glories of the most High. If to be "almighty"¹², heart-searching¹³, omnipresent¹⁴, eternal¹⁵, incomprehensible¹⁶, independent¹⁷, immutable¹⁸; if this is to be *very* God, then CHRIST our Redeemer hath the most undoubted claim to it.

His

⁶ Coloss. iii. 24.

⁸ Isai. vi. 1.

¹⁰ Jude 25.

¹² Rev i 8.

¹⁴ Matt. xviii. 20.

¹⁶ Matt. xi. 27.

¹⁸ Heb. i. 12.

⁷ James ii. 1. Isai. vi. 3.

⁹ 1 John v. 20.

¹¹ Rom. ix. 5.

¹³ Acts i. 24.

¹⁵ 1 Tim. i. 17.

¹⁷ John x. 18.

His *works* also proclaim his eternal power and godhead. If ¹⁸ the heavens declare the ¹⁹ glory of the LORD, and the firmament ²⁰ sheweth his handy-work ²¹; if on the vast Creation the stamp of the Almighty appears; if the bright sun or twinkling stars, or all the brighter suns, Cherubs and Seraphs, which burn before the throne of GOD, proclaim the hand that made them to be divine; then CHRIST challenges this honour. ²² All things ²³ were made by him; and without him was ²⁴ not any thing made that was made ²⁵. He ²⁶ spake and it was done ²⁷. And he still ²⁸ upholdeth them all ²⁹: for his pleasure they ³⁰ are and were created ³¹, by whom and for ³² whom are all things ³³. And as he is the Creator, he is also the Governor and Judge of all. To him it appertaineth to exercise every act of divine power; to ³⁴ forgive sins ³⁵; ³⁶ to quicken whom he will ³⁷; to send the ³⁸ Spirit ³⁹; to raise the dead ⁴⁰; to execute the final judgment ⁴¹; to determine the eternal state of men and angels ⁴². Well might
we

¹⁹ Psal. xix. 1.

²¹ Psal. xxxiii. 9.

²³ Rev. iv. 11.

²⁵ Matt. ix. 2.

²⁷ John xv. 26.

²⁹ Rom. xiv. 11.

²⁰ John i. 3.

²² Heb. i. 3.

²⁴ 1 Cor. viii. 6.

²⁶ John v. 21.

²⁸ John xi. 43.

³⁰ Matt. xxv. 31—46.

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we charge, as the *Jews* did³¹, any the highest created Being with *blasphemy* who should presume thus to exalt himself. He that doth these things is God alone.

Worship is solely due to the one eternal God. "To him every knee must bow, every tongue must confess"³². But this is paid in the highest manner to the Lord CHRIST; is claimed by him as his prerogative; and offered by saints on earth and angels in heaven. Jealous for the honour of his Father, so as to be incapable of suffering the least profanation in the farthest courts of his house, he yet received and vindicated the *Hosannas* of the multitude "in the midst of the temple"³³. These hymns of praise to the most High were no more than his due, "who, being in the form of God, counted it no robbery to be equal with God"³⁴. We must honour the Son as we honour the Father³⁵. He that would not from those who regarded him as a man³⁶, receive the least mark of divine honour, most willingly admits an Apostle at his feet worshipping him as his "LORD" and

³¹ Matt. ix. 3.

³² Matt. xxi. 15.

³³ John v. 23.

³⁴ Rom. xiv. 11.

³⁵ Phil. ii. 6.

³⁶ Matt. xix. 17.

"and his GOD³⁷". And they indeed are so fully assured of his eternal power and Godhead, that in the deepest seasons of distress and difficulty they call upon him, and resign "their dying souls³⁸" into his hands. Nor is he GOD on earth alone adored, the hosts of heaven bow down before his footstool. "The angels of GOD worship him³⁹". One of the most glorious visions of the upper world was this King upon his throne, surrounded with his Seraphim; their faces veiled with reverential awe, and pouring forth their sacred homage and highest adoration: "they cried one to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory⁴⁰". And when this present scene shall be no more, this still shall be the service of eternity, when "every creature day and night shall never rest saying, Holy, holy, holy LORD GOD Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come⁴¹". Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory, and honour, and power, and blessing⁴²! Can higher worship be offered? If this belong to our Redeemer, surely he is *very* GOD.

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2. CHRIST

³⁷ John xx. 28.

³⁹ Heb. i. 6.

⁴¹ Rev. iv. 8.

³⁸ Acts vii. 59.

⁴⁰ Isai. vi. 1—12.

⁴² Rev. iv. 11.

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⁴¹ Rev. iv. 8.

³⁸ Acts vii. 59.

⁴⁰ Isai. vi. 1—12.

⁴² Rev. iv. 11.

2. CHRIST is as truly *man* as he is GOD. Since redemption was to be obtained in and by the nature which had sinned, "it behoved" him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, sin only excepted⁴⁴. This must have been excepted, else he had not been "a Lamb without spot or blemish"; nor could he otherwise have "taken away the sin of the world"; for had he been himself a sinner, he should have died under his own iniquity. Now that he is very *man*, and such a sinless man, the scriptures fully assure us. As man he is formed of the substance of his Mother, "partaker of flesh and blood", as other children are, and born in the same way: yet "sanctified in the womb, that he might not partake of that corruption, which by natural generation descends to every son of fallen *Adam*. He was a "holy thing, undefiled" and separate from sinners⁴⁵; and for that purpose "the power of the Highest overshadowed her"⁴⁶. As we are, he had the constituent parts of human nature, a reasonable soul and human flesh. As other children "he increased in wisdom as in stature"⁴⁷. He was one with us in all the human wants and sinless

⁴⁴ Heb. ii. 17.⁴⁵ Heb. vii. 26.⁴⁶ Luke i. 35.⁴⁷ Luke ii. 52.

sinless infirmities: his soul deficient in knowledge, affected with grief, vexed with indignation, sensible of reproaches, choosing to avoid sufferings, exceeding sorrowful under them ⁴⁸: his body subject to weariness, hunger, thirst, pain and death ⁴⁹. Thus he lived, thus he died as a man: yet was he not merely man, but God-man; possessing both natures in all their plenitude in one CHRIST.

II. The manner in which CHRIST redeemed us from the curse of the Law, must be observed; namely, "by being made a curse for us". Where we must remark,

First, His substitution for us. *Secondly*, What he bore as our substitute.

(I.) CHRIST, both God and man, was the sinner's substitute. "He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows" ⁵⁰. Our state was desperate, you have heard. Nor was there found a remedy, until God, from the abyss of his wisdom, declared the counsel of peace which was betwixt the Sacred Three. That one of them should take the sinful nature,

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⁴⁸ Mark xiii. 32. Mark iii. 5. Matt. xxvi. 38, 39.

⁴⁹ John iv. 6. Mark xi. 12. John xix. 28. Psal. cxvi. 3. Mark xv. 37.

⁵⁰ Isai. liii. 4.

and suffer the curse, that justice might be glorified in the punishment, and mercy be exalted in the pardon of sin. The Son consents to be the person. The covenant runs,
⁵¹ If he will make his soul a sacrifice for sin,
⁵² he shall see of the travail of his soul, and
⁵³ be satisfied⁵⁴: freely he complies. "Lo!
⁵⁵ I come to do thy will⁵⁶. A body is prepared for him⁵⁷. God lays on him the iniquity of us all⁵⁸. He is made sin for us, who knew no sin⁵⁹. He suffers, the just for the unjust⁶⁰. He offers himself to bear the sins of many, yea in his own body on the tree, to bring in for sinners by his own blood-shedding "eternal Redemption⁶¹. Here then behold the second *Adam*: a new covenant-head and representative, bearing the persons and characters of his people, communicating with them in all things: being what they are, and so making them one with him, that all his transactions are their own. He a *sin offering*, a *curse*, a *sufferer* for them; they *crucified*, *dead*, *buried*, *rising*, *living* in and with him⁶².

(2.) As

⁵¹ Heb. x. 7.⁵² Heb. x. 5.⁵³ Isai. liii. 6.⁵⁴ 2 Cor. v. 21.⁵⁵ 1 Pet. iii. 18.⁵⁶ Heb. ix. 12.⁵⁷ 2 Cor. v. 21.

Gal. iii. 13.

Gal. ii. 20.

Rom. vi. 8.

Coloss. iii. 1.

(2.) As our substitute, he underwent all that the law demanded from sinners. The curse in all its extent and bitterness he endured from the cradle to the grave, the award of sin was executed upon him. And how heavily executed, a short review of his sufferings will tell. See the Redeemer entering the lists, Sin and Hell and Death, yea GOD himself against him. On him the poisoned arrows of vengeance are to be expended. An outcast from the womb! Sought for by the sword soon as he drew his breath, a fugitive, a forlorn; ⁵⁸ a worm and no man, ⁵⁸ despised and rejected of men. Having no ⁵⁸ place to lay his head ⁵⁸ ⁵⁸. His whole life a series of labours, wants, temptations, reproaches, persecutions, until the hour came when peculiarly the curse descended, and ⁵⁸ the ⁵⁸ powers of darkness ⁵⁹ ⁵⁸ prevailed. When given into the hands of the devil, who is the executioner of divine vengeance, and ⁵⁸ hath ⁵⁸ the power of death ⁶⁰ ⁵⁸, the wages of sin; he endured that fearful baptism of blood and sweat, and tears extorted by the pains of hell which came about him; and then finished

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OU

⁵⁸ Isai. liii. 3. Matt. viii. 20.⁵⁹ Luke xxii. 53.⁶⁰ Heb. ii. 14.

on a cross the great expiation, having ⁵⁵ destroyed thereby death, and him that had the ⁵⁵ power of it ⁵⁵. Would you be a witness of the conflict, and see the burden of your weighty guilt, go then to the garden of *Gethsemane*; and in the silent darkness of that dreadful night, the groans of JESUS at a distance will direct thy footsteps to that scene of his sufferings. What a sight of horror! What agonizing pangs are these! Why this strong crying and tears! And lo! he falls, he lies along the ground: from every pore, the sweat and blood mingled start in great drops and trickle down; the cold ground steams with the purple gore: weltering he lies. O JESUS, SAVIOUR, what hath thus laid thee low? What extorts from thee these bitter cries? Thy deserts, thy curse, poor sinner. But dost thou stand aghast at this? O couldst thou see my unknown pangs! my soul's exceeding sorrows, even unto death; my foreamazement; my heaviness past utterance; these blasts of the breath of my Father's displeasure; ⁵⁵ this, this is the bitter cup ⁵⁵ my soul cries to remove; but, ⁵⁵ Father, thy will ⁵⁵ be done ⁶¹. The angels minister to him ⁶² ⁵⁵. The dreadful storm abates: he rises: he seeks his

⁶¹ Matt. xxvi. 39—46.⁶² Luke xxii. 43.

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his friends, his friends ^{ss} asleep through for-
^{ss} row ^{ss}. But his enemies are waking: the
traitor comes. Betrayed and sold by one dis-
ciple; denied by another; forsaken by all;
arrested as a thief, and delivered into the
hands of the wicked.

Follow him to the tribunal, and hear the
cries of a blood-thirsty people, and the sen-
tence of an unjust judge. See the insult,
the mockery and cruelty added to reproach.
The scourges that tear his sacred body, and
open again the bloody fountain; the thorns
pressed hard upon his temples; new wounds
to ^{ss} mar his visage more than any man's ^{63 ss};
a visage already deformed with *buffetings*, and
defiled with *spitting*. What torments he en-
dured! condemned to the cross, it is bound
upon him. He groans, he sinks under the
load. Yet ^{ss} as a lamb led to the slaughter,
^{ss} he openeth not his mouth ^{64 ss}: to *Calvary*
he goes, there to be fastned on it. O! fear-
ful curse, ^{ss} If this be done in the green tree,
^{ss} what shall be done in the dry ^{65 ss}? The cross
is fixed in the ground: JESUS is stretched
upon it: stripped, to endure the shame of

N 4.

our

⁶³ Isai. lii. 14.

⁶⁴ Isai. liii. 7.

⁶⁵ Luke xxiii. 31.

our nakedness; covered with clotted gore; a spectacle of woe! Stretched are his sacred arms; O why! these nails will tell. To be fixed fast upon that tree; in shame and torture to expire, to endure the death, the accursed death of the cross. They pierce his hands, they pierce his feet; the wounds are torn wide by the suspended body. He is lifted up. O sinner, look upon him! lifted up he is to take away thy sins. He bears them all on this accursed tree. Stay yet a while. Behold the ⁵⁵ man of sorrows truly, ⁵⁵ sorrows like unto whose have never ⁵⁵ sorrows been ⁶⁶ ⁵⁵! These sufferings for thee he willingly endures. He refuses the wine mingled with myrrh, that he may ⁵⁵ drink the ⁵⁵ dregs of the cup of trembling ⁵⁵. Creation beholds astonished the LORD of Life expiring. The sun grows dark; the heavens lour; the earth trembles; the rocks rend: whilst tears of blood descend; and in the pangs of death and dereliction the Redeemer cries, ⁵⁵ My ⁵⁵ GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken ⁵⁵ me ⁶⁷ ⁵⁵? Then finishes transgression, proclaims it, and expires. He dies: the soldier's spear opens his heart that beats no more: the blood and water flow; still warm, though

⁶⁶ Lam. i. 12.⁶⁷ Matt. xxvii. 46.

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though life is gone. Thus dies on the accursed tree the sinner's substitute. Sin is atoned for, Justice is satisfied, the Prisoner must be discharged. His Soul is not left in hell, nor doth this Holy One of GOD see corruption. The grave may not cover her slain. He bursts the bands of death in token of his victory, and leads captivity captive. Death hath "no more dominion over him"; as "he was delivered for our offences, he is "raised again for our justification"⁶⁸". A pardoning GOD is found: A pardoning GOD proclaimed. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed "each other"⁶⁹". The bright perfections of the eternal GOD here unite and form a new discovery of the Deity; the milder beams of mercy gild the throne; and that once *consuming fire* becomes approachable even by sinners. Glorious is JEHOVAH now in pardoning, and righteous in mercy. Which leads me,

III. To the benefits which by his bloodshedding CHRIST has purchased for us: and these are chiefly,

I. Pardon

⁶⁸ Rom. iv. 25.

⁶⁹ Psal. lxxxv. 10.

1. Pardon of our sins and peace with God.
 " In whom we have redemption through his
 " blood, the forgiveness of sins, according
 " to the riches of his grace. Being justified
 " by faith, we have peace with God through
 " JESUS CHRIST our LORD. God is now
 " righteous and just to forgive us our sins⁷⁰ ss.
 He hath exacted the penalty from our surety :
 the debt is paid: the bond is canceled. JESUS
 " hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to
 " his cross. Who is he that condemneth,
 " since CHRIST hath died⁷¹ ss? This is our
 prevailing plea. This a sufficient answer to
 all the accusations of the Law, and the fears
 of a guilty conscience. The more we con-
 sider the fulness of the Surety, the more shall
 we be confirmed in the safety of those who
 trust in him : He cannot fail us. " In him
 " there is plenteous redemption⁷² ss. All ful-
 ness ; yea, " all and more than all that we
 " can ask or think⁷³ ss. The chief of sinners
 need not fear. " He can save to the utter-
 " most ss: He came into the world for this
 very purpose. " Where sin abounded, there
 " shall pardoning grace abound⁷⁴ ss. God
 hath

⁷⁰ Rom. v. 1. Ephes. i. 7. Rom. iii. 26.

⁷¹ Rom. viii. 34.

⁷² Psal. cxxx. 7.

⁷³ Coloss. i. 19. Ephes. iii. 20.

⁷⁴ Rom. v. 20.

hath no quarrel with the greatest sinner returning through CHRIST. ⁵⁵ He will be merciful to his unrighteousness; his sins and ⁵⁵ iniquities will he remember no more ^{75 55}. His justice and truth are now as much engaged to receive us graciously, as before they were engaged to punish us rigorously. He cannot but abundantly pardon. His glory now is this; ⁵⁵ Peace proclaimed on earth, ⁵⁵ good-will towards men ⁷⁶. The wall of separation is broken down⁵⁵. The veil of sin is taken away. God stretches out the sceptre of his grace; commands us to touch it and live. ⁵⁵ Let him take hold on my strength, ⁵⁵ and make peace with me, and he shall make ⁵⁵ peace with me ^{77 55}. See it fully demonstrated in this blessed scripture. ⁵⁵ God was ⁵⁵ in CHRIST reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto ⁵⁵ them. Now then we are ambassadors for ⁵⁵ CHRIST, as though God did beseech you by ⁵⁵ us, we pray you in CHRIST's stead, be ye ⁵⁵ reconciled to God ^{78 55}.

2. By CHRIST's redemption of us from the curse, we obtain all the promises of the Spirit.

⁷⁵ Heb. viii. 12.

⁷⁶ Luke ii. 14.

⁷⁷ Isai. xxvii. 5.

⁷⁸ 2 Cor. v. 20.

Spirit. Until this was removed there could be no intercourse between the holy God and sinful man; and if this intercourse were not restored on earth, man must be for ever excluded from the presence of God: "Without holiness no man can see the LORD"⁷⁹. But no such could be found, unless the Spirit of holiness "created us anew". Our corruption and weakness unqualified us for any work of goodness. Vile we were, and vile we must for ever have remained, if not "renewed in the spirit of our minds". CHRIST therefore in delivering us from the curse hath obtained the Spirit also to deliver us from the power of our sins. "He hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men"⁸⁰, even for the rebellious; and he is now exalted at "the right hand of God", in virtue of his obedience unto death, "to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to his people"⁸¹. From him all power is derived: "Without him we can do nothing"⁸²: but all things "through him strengthening us"⁸³. All the graces of God's Spirit to enlighten, enliven, comfort and sanctify our souls, he hath the dispen-

⁷⁹ Heb. xii. 14.⁸⁰ Psalm lxviii. 18.⁸¹ Acts v. 31.⁸² John xv. 9.⁸³ Phil. iv. 13.

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dispensation of; and sheds them abroad in the hearts of those whom by his preventing grace he stirreth up to seek him. Helping their infirmities in prayer, and blessing them with an answer of peace, and ^{ss} an abundant supply ^{ss} of the Spirit ^{ss}, according to their necessities. We have now a throne of grace open, and are bid ^{ss} to come boldly to it, that we may ^{ss} obtain mercy, and find grace to help in ^{ss} every time of need ^{84 ss}. And whilst his blood is sprinkled on our consciences, we may ^{ss} draw near in full assurance of faith ^{ss}, and the most confident persuasion, that ^{ss} whatsoever we shall ask in his name, God will ^{ss} give it us ⁸⁵. And that thus growing in ^{ss} grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord ^{ss} JESUS CHRIST, he will, having conducted ^{ss} us by his counsel here, at last bring us to ^{ss} his glory ^{86 ss}. For this also,

3. He hath by his blood-shedding obtained for us not only present but *eternal redemption* ⁸⁷. He hath removed the flaming sword that guarded the tree of Life. He hath opened the everlasting doors. "He, as ^{ss} our forerunner, is for us entered; we are ^{ss} already

⁸⁴ Heb. iv. 16.

⁸⁶ Psalm lxxiii. 24.

⁸⁵ John xv. 16.

⁸⁷ Heb. ix. 12.

" already fet down with him in heavenly
 " places ⁸⁸ ^{ss}. As members of his body, we
 must follow our Head. ^{ss} Where he is, there
^{ss} must we be also ^{ss}. The promise is sure to
 all the seed. Though we have a ^{ss} meetness
 " for the inheritance of the Saints in light "
 wrought in us, our title to it stands on the
 everlasting Righteousness finished upon the
 cross. That JESUS was obedient unto Death,
 is all our plea: and at the last day we shall
 see our obligations above all to the Redeemer,
 when we shall receive ^{ss} eternal Life as the
 " gift of GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our
 " Lord ⁸⁹ ^{ss}. He that endured the cross must
 have the glory of his purchase. No desert
 of ours ^{ss} lifts us from the dunghil to set us
 " among the princes ". We shall then see it
 wholly obtained for us by his merits, when
 " with his ransomed people we shall come to
 " Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon
 " our heads ⁹⁰ ^{ss}. They that surround his
 throne, all cast their crowns at his feet: they
 ascribe to him alone their mighty blifs: " For
 " thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to
 " GOD by thy blood, out of every kindred,
 " and tongue, and people, and nation, and
 " hast

⁸⁸ Ephes. ii. 6. Heb. vi. 20.

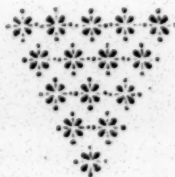
⁸⁹ Rom. vi. 23.

⁹⁰ Isai. xxxv. 10.

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"hast made us unto our GOD Kings and
"Priests"⁹¹. Who wishes not to join their
praises? And do we wish it indeed? Let us
then learn them here below. If now we find
in him Redemption; if now we believe in
him as our Deliverer from the curse of the
Law; if now we trust in him alone for grace
in time, and glory in eternity: then will he
finish his new creation in us; perfect what
he hath begun, and bring us where neither
sin nor death are known, but HE, the once
suffering, now exalted Redeemer reigns, and
all his saints adore him, yea shall reign with
him in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

⁹¹ Rev. v. 10.



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S E R M O N IX.

Salvation by Grace.



EPHESIANS II. 8.

*For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and
that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.*



O mistakes are so dangerous as those which relate to our eternal salvation: yet through the blindness of our own hearts, and wickedness of others; who would ^{ss} pervert the right ways ^{ss} of the LORD^{ss}, we had need take great heed to our feet, that they turn not out of the way. Our only sure direction is the word of God. This is appointed to be ^{ss} a lamp ^{ss} unto our feet, and a light unto our paths^{1 ss}. He that walketh after this rule, peace will be unto him. As it is the universal Guide, it is open for every man's perusal, and plain to
O every

¹ Psalm cxix. 105.

every man's understanding. Many things in it indeed, through a variety of circumstances, are dark and hard to be understood, but they are not points essential to our salvation. These will afford matter to the end of the world for such as prefer knowledge to practice, and choose to dispute rather than obey. The things of most importance and necessary to be known are easy to be understood: "He that runs may read them". No comment is wanting, but a desire to know the truth, with a disposition to follow it. Thus "the Bereans sought and found"². And so to the end of the world, "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God"³. He that is faithful to the little light he hath, shall find it "shine more and more unto the perfect day".

Let us beware then of calling any man master. One is our Master, even CHRIST⁴. "Search the scriptures"⁵. It is his command. Therein is contained all we need to know. We have his promise to assist our humble inquiries. "They shall all be taught of God"⁶. Then the Salvation by Grace, which the words

² Acts xvii. 11.

³ John vii. 17.

⁴ Matt. xxiii. 8.

⁵ John v. 39.

⁶ John vi. 45.

words in the text speak of, will be discovered, embraced and delighted in. "Comparing "spiritual things with spiritual", we shall have our hearts daily more confirmed "in the "truth as it is in JESUS". And if we persist "to follow on to know the LORD", we shall find the salvation by grace to issue shortly in a salvation of glory.

The grand dispute that in St *Paul's* day rent the Church was, "Whether Faith or "Works justified the sinner; whether man's "desert or GOD's free grace were the cause "of salvation?" He was the strenuous asserter of the sovereignty of Grace and the freedom of Justification. Yea, he reckons these such essential truths, that he calls the opposite doctrines *another Gospel*⁷. Yet those who have agreed to receive his writings as given by the inspiration of GOD, have nevertheless revived the errors he condemned, and still seek justification by the Law, and salvation by Works and not by Grace. The following plain truths are submitted to every man's consideration, who will be at the pains of comparing them with the fountain from whence to me they appear to be derived.

May they be the blessed means of enlightning any heart in the knowledge of the truth, or of confirming the faith of those who are seeking the falvation by Grace revealed in the Gospel.

I shall endeavour to shew from these words,

- I. What is the Salvation here spoken of.
- II. Prove that it is wholly of Grace.
- III. Shew the necessity of its being of Faith, that it might be by Grace.
- IV. Make some suitable Application.

I. The Salvation here spoken of, is our *final salvation*; including all the various steps which lead to it. This is evident from the preceding verses, where St *Paul* mentions not only our resurrection together with CHRIST, but also "our sitting together in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS"^s; that is, by virtue of that union which subsists between the head and the members. His exaltation we are already interested in. Our salvation is as much secured for us in CHRIST, as it will be at the last day: for "by Grace we are saved"^s. He hath wrought out the salvation for us in all its extent, of pardon from the guilt of sin, deliverance

^s Ephes. ii. 6.

deliverance from the dominion of sin, and as "our Forerunner is for us entered" to take possession of the inheritance he hath purchased by virtue of his obedience unto death, and to bestow it on them who "shall be heirs" of Salvation". We must take the whole salvation together. We must not separate the links of this chain of Grace. Though CHRIST is the author of eternal salvation, it is only to those who here below know him as their Saviour, freely discharging them from the guilt; and, together with the punishment, by his Spirit delivering them from the power of their sins.

II. This Salvation is wholly of grace. The word *grace* has several meanings in scripture. But here and in many other places its signification is clear from the context. It is the gift or an act of the mere favour of GOD. And to this the whole of our salvation must be ascribed, whether in the contrivance and execution or communication of it: Salvation is wholly of Grace.

I. The contrivance of it was of Grace. "The things which are not", as much subsist in the divine mind as if they were. God

foresaw the fall of man, and provided a remedy for it ere it came to pass. His own glory is the end of all his actions. In this⁹ he would glorify the riches of his Grace¹⁰. This is the good pleasure of his will: fallen man hath nothing but misery to present. GOD will therefore have mercy, because he will have mercy: He worketh after the counsel of his own will. "He hath saved us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in CHRIST JESUS before the world began¹¹". This is the origin of our salvation from eternity; the mere pleasure and grace of GOD. Nothing foreseen in us, either done or to be done by us, but the purpose of his own will is the first cause.

2. The execution of this scheme of salvation, planned out in the divine mind from eternity, is wholly of GOD's Grace: That GOD should "not spare his own Son, but freely give him up for us all¹²": That the Son should become man, "for us men and our salvation:" That he should "by one oblation of himself once offered obtain eternal redemption for us¹³"; was what we could

⁹ Ephes. i. 6.¹⁰ 2 Tim. i. 9.¹¹ Rom. viii. 32.¹² Heb. ix. 12.

could no more have conceived than we could deserve : yea it was contrary to all our deserts, and above all our thoughts. The angels themselves could not fathom this abyss of love. This " mystery hid from ages and generations " he hath revealed to us in the gospel.

GOD knew full well what his Son must endure : CHRIST saw for what end he came into the world ; for he was in the divine purpose " the Lamb slain from the foundation " of the world ¹³ ". The obstinacy of men and their rejection of him was foretold : yet " he gave himself a propitiation for our sins ; " and not for ours only, but for the sins of " the whole world " ¹⁴ ". It was an act of such astonishing mercy and rich grace as passed all understanding. " God commendeth his " love towards us, in that whilst we were " yet sinners CHRIST died for the ungodly " ¹⁵ ". Every demerit of ours is disregarded, or rather sovereign Grace triumphs in giving the greatest gift imaginable to the most undeserving.

3. The communication of this salvation to every individual who shall finally partake

O 4

of

¹³ Rev. xiii. 8.

¹⁴ 1 John ii. 2.

¹⁵ Rom. v. 6, 8.

of it, is purely of Grace. Consider it as implying present salvation from guilt and from corruption; or the eternal salvation in heaven.

I. Salvation from *guilt* is wholly by Grace. We are considered in scripture ^{as} as enemies, ^{as} as ungodly, unjust, and dead in trespasses ^{as} and sins ¹⁶^{as}. There is nothing in any man, which seems in the most distant manner to give him a claim to the divine mercy. Our case is, as hath been shewn, utterly desperate. God finds nothing in us but sin, and the disposition of the heart continually towards it. Whoever is truly brought to God through CHRIST knows this to have been his very case, until ^{as} God called him by his ^{as} Grace ^{as}. The King upon his throne issues the undeserved pardon. ^{as} He justifies the un- ^{as} godly ¹⁷^{as}; and this, ^{as} according to his good ^{as} pleasure, which he hath purposed in him- ^{as} self ¹⁸^{as}. He doth not find us just, but makes us so. It is an act of his mere Grace and Mercy; without the shadow of desert on our part. Yea when we had all the demerit that the enmity of our hearts, the ungodliness of our lives, and our deadly state of trespasses and

¹⁶ Rom. v. 6—10. Ephes. ii. 1.

¹⁷ Rom. iv. 5.

¹⁸ Ephes. i. 9.

and sins could give us. It is true, it is on account of CHRIST; "we have redemption " through his blood ¹⁹ " : but the pardon of sin comes not to us as the less a matter of favour, because " he gave himself a ransom for " all ²⁰ ". CHRIST's death and obedience alter not our state of demerit: besides the very gift of CHRIST, who purchased this great mercy, is in the highest degree of Grace.

2. Salvation from the *power of sin* is wholly of Grace: whilst guilt remained the throne of Grace was guarded by a flaming cherub. It is by the removal of this, that GOD doth return to visit us, and send the Spirit into our hearts. Without this we must for ever remain the bondsmen of corruption: "They " who are in the flesh cannot please GOD ²¹ ". And in this state we remain until CHRIST delivers us through Faith in his atonement. Then our persons " become accepted in the " beloved ²² ": He takes possession of us for his own: " He worketh then mightily all " our works in us ²³ . We have nothing we " have not received ²⁴ ". All our *sanctification* is as much the gift of GOD, as our *justification*.

¹⁹ Ephes. i. 7.²⁰ 1 Tim. ii. 6.²¹ Rom. viii. 8.²² Ephes. i. 6.²³ Isai. xxvi. 12.²⁴ 1 Cor. iv. 7.

tion. We offer him only his own. " By the Grace of God we are what we are²⁵ ". Boasting is utterly excluded. We are not only pardoned as rebels, but of mere bounty fed every day, and the life which is given us is maintained from the King's table. " The²⁶ life which I will give them shall be in them, a well of water springing up to everlasting²⁷ life²⁸ ". All is of Grace. *Faith, Repentance, Love, Obedience, Perseverance in well-doing*, are all expressly declared to be " the gifts of God²⁹ ", or the effects immediately produced by those gifts.

It must not be inferred from hence, that we are machines, actuated merely by impulses from without or within ourselves. By no means. The first of God's gifts in sanctification is " the restoration of our will to its right choice of God as our Master. " He calls upon us daily to make use of the measure of grace which he hath given us, with the promise of the increase of it. We choose what God approves. The choice and work consequent thereupon is not the less our own, because " his grace prevents us that we may have

²⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 10.²⁶ John iv. 14.²⁷ Ephes. ii. 8. Acts v. 31. Gal. v. 6.

Heb. viii. 10. John x. 28.

“have a good-will, and worketh with us
“when we have that good-will²⁸.”

3. The eternal salvation of our souls is also of Grace. It is certain that God hath promised to reward us “according to our works²⁹”. And that there will be in the day of judgment a proportion between the work and the reward. Some will “shine as stars” of greater magnitude than others : but eternal life will not cease nevertheless to be the gift of God through JESUS CHRIST ; and we shall, “as many as are saved, look for eternal life as “the mercy of the LORD³⁰”. For not only have we obtained the first step of admission into the kingdom of heaven by Grace ; and the subsequent ones, which in God’s appointed way of holiness we have taken through the same, but also our inheritance is still “a purchased possession³¹”. CHRIST’S perfect obedience affords the only legal claim to life eternal. We receive it therefore as of promise through him. There will be in us “a meetness indeed for the inheritance amongst the “saints in light³²” ; and this greater in one than in another ; but no meritorious claim.

No

²⁸ Article X.

²⁹ Rev. xxii. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 41.

³⁰ Jude 21.

³¹ Ephes. i. 14.

³² Coloss. i. 12.

No man will then say, "I am worthy." No, he will be surprised even at what CHRIST adjudges to him, as conscious how unworthy he is: if he must enter into the kingdom, it will be for ever to proclaim, "Worthy is the
 " Lamb that was slain, to receive glory, and
 " honour, and praise, and blessing ³³ ³⁵.

III. It is of Faith that it might be by Grace ³⁴. It could be of Grace no other way than by Faith. Faith stands opposed to works in the next verse: "Not of works lest
 " any man should boast ³⁵ ³⁵. If Works of any kind preceded our acceptance with God, it would be no more of Faith; nor consequently by Grace. This is the alone medium by which the *gift of God* can be conveyed to us to secure the whole glory to himself. Those who know not the necessity of *thus* receiving the gift of God, from a deep conviction of the impossibility of doing any work pleasing to God until their attainder is reversed, ever oppose this method of salvation as too abasing. And they who object to it, as having an unfavourable influence on Morality, shew evidently their utter unacquaintedness both with the nature of true Faith and the effects of it.

" Faith

³³ Rev. iv. 11.

³⁴ Rom. iv. 16.

³⁵ Ephes. ii. 9.

“Faith is a divine conviction of the veracity of God in his word.” The general object of it is the Word of God: the effect wrought by that word is conviction of the truth. The agent is God: “It is the gift of God”. A man can no more reason himself into true faith, than he can create a world: all external evidence is of itself incapable of producing it. The head may have nothing to object, when the heart is as far as ever from “believing unto righteousness”, nor feels any of the constrainings of divine energetic Faith. Though the external evidence be from God, there must be an internal divine conviction also. It is the work of the Holy Ghost “to convince of righteousness”³⁶, and enable us to believe³⁷.”

The great object of Faith in the word is JESUS CHRIST, and all the promises which are in him: these revealed by the faithful God, Faith acquiesces in and embraces. And in this submission to the righteousness of God, and acceptance of salvation by Faith, there is implied,

First,

³⁶ John xvi. 8.

³⁷ Phil. i. 29. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

First, An acknowledgment of a state of absolute helplessness and guilt : whilst we imagine we have any thing of our own to commend us to GOD, Faith is made void. The salvation by Grace proposed to Faith is only for the lost and desperate; for those who are convinced they are nothing, have nothing, can do nothing pleasing to GOD. Until the soul be brought to this state of self-emptiness, a man cannot "believe to salvation" : He must be going about to establish his own righteousness. He will ever be thinking that he hath or ought to have some *claim* to the divine favour above another man. He will be trusting, in whole or in part, on something done or to be done by him, instead of what has been done for him seventeen hundred years ago : but when any soul is taught his real state, then he is assured he must be saved by Grace, or not at all. The grand mistake is here. Men know not the depth of their natural corruption, wickedness and weakness. This discovered, salvation by grace through faith will meet with no more objections.

Secondly, In receiving this salvation, faith simply submits to the truth declared. It receives

ceives the "record of GOD, that he hath given
"unto us eternal life, and this life is in his
"Son³⁸". It doth nothing to merit salvation,
nor does the possessor of it see any desert in
himself more than in the vilest of sinners.
Faith freely takes what GOD freely gives:
the sinner's heart, as the beggar's hand, rea-
dily receives the gift of Grace.

Thus it is, that through faith at first we
are brought into a state of reconciliation with
GOD; and "being justified by faith, we have
"peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our
"LORD³⁹": and ever after it is the support
of our soul, or rather the channel of con-
veying to us the supplies of grace for all our
life of holiness: "The life I now live in the
"flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of GOD⁴⁰".
Believing the certainty of the promises in him,
"we draw water out of these wells of salva-
"tion⁴¹": and our final perseverance and
eternal happiness come in the same way;
"being kept by the power of GOD through
"faith unto salvation⁴²". He that endureth
"to the end, the same shall be saved⁴³". We
shall endure if our faith fail not. From the
whole,

³⁸ 1 John v. 11.³⁹ Rom. v. 1.⁴⁰ Gal. ii. 20.⁴¹ Isai. xii. 3.⁴² 1 Pet. i. 5.⁴³ Matt. x. 22.

whole, I trust the salvation by Grace through Faith hath appeared to you plainly to be the word of God; and have nothing more to add than a short Application from what hath been said.

I. What encouragement doth the gospel give to every sinner who sees his guilt and misery? ^{ss} It is a faithful saying, and worthy ^{ss} of all acceptation, that JESUS CHRIST came ^{ss} into the world to save sinners; yea, the ^{ss} chief of sinners ^{44 ss}. No man need despair because he is a poor and miserable wretch that hath no works to plead; nothing ^{ss} but evil, ^{ss} and that continually^{ss}. Salvation is of Grace, ^{ss} without money and without price^{45 ss}; and therefore free for every guilty soul. Think not that because sin hath abounded, that therefore you are far from hope. By no means: ^{ss} where ^{ss} sin hath abounded, there shall grace much ^{ss} more abound ^{46 ss}. God's salvation is one. Whatever degrees of guilt men may have contracted, it bears the same favourable aspect to all. They who have the least sin must be damned if they do not plead it; and they who have the greatest are sure of pardon and acceptance if they do. It is not suspended
on

⁴⁴ 1 Tim. i. 15.

⁴⁵ Ifai. lv. 1.

⁴⁶ Rom. v. 20.

on any conditions of previous endeavours, and labours, and resolutions of amendment ; for that were to destroy the riches of the Grace, and to counteract the very designs of God. You are no more required to do any thing to merit it, than you are to pluck the sun from the heavens, or stay the current of the seas. Indeed you might as easily do the one as the other. You are undone and lost ; your case is desperate : GOD will glorify his Grace in pardoning you. He sends his Son : He declares " he is well-pleased in him ", and with all that come to GOD by him ; here is the *gift*. It is as *free* as the light of the sun : " Look to him and be ye saved, all the ends " of the earth ⁴⁷ ". He wants no good thing of you. He asks for no such thing from you : " Believe, and be saved ⁴⁸ ", is the gospel word. In self-despair thus to be found at the foot of the cross is salvation begun ; and that life derived from a believing view of " JESUS delivered for our offences, and raised " again for our justification ⁴⁹ ", will carry on this salvation until Grace shall have accomplished it, and " we shall see him face to " face ⁵⁰ ".

P

2. The

⁴⁷ Isai. xlv. 22.⁴⁸ Acts xvi. 31.⁴⁹ Rom. iv. 25.⁵⁰ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

2. The sin and danger of seeking salvation in any other way than by Grace, is exceeding great. I speak now particularly of our present acceptance with God, which many are continually going about to obtain "by works" of righteousness which they have done, or by blending Faith and Works together, as concurring causes of their acceptance. Nothing reflects such dishonour upon God, nothing can be so surely fatal to ourselves as such an attempt.

It reflects such high dishonour on God and his Son. It saith, "Salvation is no more of Grace": for is any thing besides "CHRIST's" *one* oblation once offered" needful to merit your acceptance? Then you associate yourself with him, become a partner of his undertaking, and rob him of that peculiar glory of which he is so jealous. But he wants nothing of you: he can receive nothing from you; because indeed you can offer nothing which must not still offend. Which of your good deeds will you bring to the cross as auxiliary to the Saviour's atonement? With what abhorrence must it be rejected by him, "who" by the eternal Spirit offered himself without "spot

"spot unto God"? Surely had any such spot been found in him, as is in every work of yours, he had died in vain. Besides, where were the riches of grace if you contributed ever so little to the purchase? "If it be of Works, it is no more Grace, otherwise work is no more work"⁵¹. God's glory in pardoning is utterly obscured, and it is no longer the gift of God.

And what can be so fatal to yourself? You thus cut yourself off from the only method of salvation; you counteract the designs of God. You put it out of his power to save you, for he cannot deny himself. If you will lay any other foundation than he hath laid, you are fallen from Grace⁵²: you must abide that devouring storm which will sweep away your vain deceitful hopes. And wo unto those works that stand up to plead for your acceptance. Unable to bear the severity of God's justice, "this broken reed you have leaned upon will run into your soul and pierce it"⁵³. You will then too late discover, that those who would not plead a salvation by Grace will never be able to escape the damnation of hell.

P 2

3. How

⁵¹ Rom. xi. 6.⁵² Gal. v. 4.⁵³ Isai. xxxvi. 6.

3. How glorious to GOD, how honourable to the REDEEMER, how safe for the undone sinner, how effectual to engage his heart to GOD, must this method of Gospel-grace appear? GOD is acknowledged to be all majesty and all mercy; CHRIST all-glorious and all-sufficient. We have grounds of confidence the most enduring and satisfying: and for all the Grace we receive feel the constrainings of the debt of gratitude immense as the gift bestowed on us.

To love GOD cannot but be the immediate effect of faith in this salvation: and obedience will then become our *delight* as well as *duty*. For ^{ss} Faith worketh by love; and this is the ^{ss} love of GOD, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are no ^{ss} longer counted grievous ^{54 ss}. O with what delight doth a sinner saved by Grace ^{ss} run the way of GOD's commandments, for he ^{ss} hath set his heart at liberty ^{55 ss}. What attainments in holiness must not he be advancing towards when ^{ss} this love constraineth ^{ss} him ^{56 ss}? And thus what all the impotent endeavours

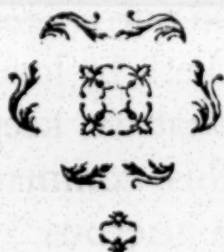
⁵⁴ 1 John v. 3.

⁵⁵ Psalm cxix. 32.

⁵⁶ 2 Cor. v. 14.

endeavours of man by his own powers could never effect, the Faith of God's elect doth work: not "making void the Law, but establishing it"⁵⁷; establishing it on a *basis* which nothing can move; enabling us to obey it on *principles* that powerfully influence; and urging us on in the pursuit of perfection absolute and intire as the summit of our hopes and the consummation of our felicity.

⁵⁷ Rom. iii. 31.





S E R M O N X.

On the Nature of true Holiness.



EPHESIANS II. 10.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

THE great Apostle Paul knew best the tendency of the principles he preached. He was not afraid that the doctrines of free Grace would lead men to licentiousness. He had happily experienced the contrary in his own soul, and seen the blessed effects of them on thousands of others. He knew "what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh"¹, the Gospel, "which is the power of God unto salvation", could effect. The discovery of the amazing Grace of God in JESUS CHRIST laid a constraining influence

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upon

¹ Rom. viii. 3.

upon the soul, which the brightest displays of the beauty of Virtue, or the clearest convictions of moral obligation, never could produce. Many have thought that the Apostle was a dangerous guide, and needed the correction of his brother *James*; as well as all the fine comments which they have since invented for maintaining the honour of Religion, and securing the interests of Morality. But *James*, as well as *Paul*, if they were alive, would disclaim the vain efforts of these reconcilers. St *Paul* was as zealous an advocate for true Holiness as St *James*; and St *James* as true an advocate for Faith, and one who expected salvation by Grace, as much as St *Paul*. They laid the same foundation, and built with the same materials. "JESUS CHRIST was their "chief corner-stone". By Faith in him they expected "Justification to Life"; and they raised the superstructure of real Holiness thereon. The "purification of the heart", St *James* as much ascribed to the efficacy of Faith as St *Paul*. But amidst the cry which is made about the interests of Morality, what is become of the practice of it? Where is that to be found? I am afraid the self-seeking, pleasure-loving, honour-loving, money-lov-

ing

2 Ephes. ii. 20.

3 Acts xv. 9—14.

ing conversation of our boasted champions for Morality, will prove a bad comment upon their doctrine. The fine-spun reasonings on the beauty, fitness, and intrinsic excellence of Virtue, look indeed pretty enough upon paper; but I cannot in the view of them help thinking of what was said of the Mask in the fable, *O lepidum caput, sed cerebrum non habet.* Alas! The vain precepts of heathen Philosophers, or the modern improvements of them under their christian disciples, are alike impotent to restrain the power of a corrupted nature. They have no influence to produce what they enjoin: they leave us, just as they found us, admiring and transgressing them.

Let us see then whether the Gospel of Jesus hath not more amply provided for the honour of God, and the obedience of his people; and, with the richest Grace bestowed, demands and produces the most exemplary conversation. ³³ We are his workmanship, ³⁴ created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, ³⁵ which God hath before ordained that we ³⁶ should walk in them ³⁷.

These words afford us a view of the state and conduct of every real Christian.

I. The

I. The principle of his spiritual life.

II. The power communicated to him to enable him to walk and please God; and,

III. The way in which in heart and life he continually advances; namely, the
 " good works which God hath before
 " ordained that he should walk in
 " them ".

I. The principle of all spiritual life is CHRIST. Until we are joined to the LORD, " the motions of sin which are in our members do work to bring forth fruit unto " death ⁴ ". Our nature, with all the labour and pains which may be bestowed on it, will never cease to be a nature " dead in trespasses " and sins ⁵ ". We must be quickened before we can live; and live before we can " walk and " please God. CHRIST is this quickning spirit ⁶ ". Spiritual life is a new creation in him: therefore we are said to be " begotten, born again, " made partakers of a divine nature, one " Spirit with the LORD, members of his body, " of his flesh, and of his bones ⁷ ". As really as " in Adam we have died ", so really " in CHRIST must

⁴ Rom. vii. 6. ⁵ Ephes. ii. 1. ⁶ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

⁷ 2 Pet. i. 4. John iii. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 17. Ephes. v. 30.

" must we be made alive ⁸ ". Until we are so, it is impossible to do any good work : for " as ⁹ the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except ¹⁰ it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ¹¹ ye abide in me ¹² ". There must be as real a union betwixt CHRIST and us, as between the members and the head, or between the root and the branches: " Without CHRIST we ¹³ can do nothing ¹⁴ ". Until he dwell in us and we in him we cannot live unto GOD, no more than a limb can live separate from the body, or a branch bear fruit when severed from the tree. This is GOD's work. In the second creation we are as much *his workmanship*, as matter was in the first. He must give the life he commands: " I passed by thee in ¹⁵ thy blood, and said unto thee, Live ¹⁶ ". There is no more power in a natural man to do good works, than for *Ezekiel's dry bones* ¹⁷ to arise and stand upon their feet. GOD's Spirit must breathe ere we can live: this Spirit is in its fulness resident in CHRIST. " He ¹⁸ quickneth whom he will ¹⁹ : He is at the ²⁰ right hand of GOD exalted, to give repent- ²¹ ance unto his people ²² ". His first act of
Grace

⁸ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

⁹ John xv. 4.

¹⁰ John xv. 6.

¹¹ Ezek. xvi. 6.

¹² Ezek. xxxvii. 3.

¹³ John v. 21.

¹⁴ Acts v. 31.

Grace towards us is his choice of us, then he draws us that we may follow him: "That I
 " may apprehend that for which I am also ap-
 " prehended in CHRIST JESUS ¹⁵ ". And in
 order hereunto his first work *in us* is the en-
 lighting our minds by his word to know
 him as our Redeemer and Saviour. He that
 " caused the light to shine out of darkness ",
 doth as sovereignly shine into us " to give us
 " the light of the knowledge of his glory in
 " the face of JESUS CHRIST ¹⁶ ". Faith then,
 the bond of union on our part, embraces the
 promises in him; for the divine truth, when
 accompanied with divine light, brings its own
 evidence along with it: " We know and be-
 " lieve the love that God hath unto us ". By
 this Faith we live, or rather, as the Apostle ex-
 presses it, " CHRIST liveth in us ": for he is our
 life: " All our fresh springs are in him ". From
 hence arises a wonderful difference in our state.
 " We are passed from death unto life ". All
 our views, desires, dispositions, designs, are
 altered; and this will be confirmed by those
 effects which naturally now flow from the
 new creation in CHRIST JESUS.

This deserves especial notice. It is mens
 folly, that they are for attempting the *prac-*
tice

¹⁵ Phil. iii. 12.

¹⁶ 2 Cor. iv. 6.

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ice without knowing the *principle* of Holiness. Wash the *Ethiopian's* skin with all the water of the sea, and you will see the black unchanged. It is his nature. So is corruption yours. It is deeper rooted than the tawny hue of the *Ethiopian*, or the spots of the Leopard. Take this one Scripture: "If any man ¹⁶ be in CHRIST, he is a new creature ¹⁶ ¹⁷; and there your way is open. You must be created anew in him, and then your heart will have the true and genuine image. You will ¹⁸ put on the new man, which, after ¹⁹ God, is created in righteousness and true ¹⁷ holiness ¹⁷ ¹⁸."

II. The power to put forth into act the life we receive, is derived from the same source. He not only prevents but follows us; "worketh in us that we may have a good will, and worketh with us when we have the good will ¹⁸."

The peculiar office of the Holy Ghost is said by our Church to be "sanctifying the elect people of God ¹⁹". And this he doth by representing to us in his Word the obligations

¹⁶ 2 Cor. v. 17.

¹⁸ Article X.

¹⁷ Ephes. iv. 24.

¹⁹ Catechism.

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gations we lie under to obey, and communicating *Power* to enable us for obedience.

1. The Holy Ghost represents to us in the Word the *obligations* we are under to walk and please God. He shews us how much we are in *duty* bound to do so: "For we are
"bought with a price, that we may glorify
"God in our bodies and in our spirits which
"are God's ²⁰". He hath the most undoubted right in and over us, who hath paid so dearly for us, as to give "his own blood" to redeem us.

This view of our state most powerfully engages us to answer the end of his purchase, by "yielding ourselves, body, soul
"and spirit, a living sacrifice to him, holy
"and acceptable, which is our reasonable
"service ²¹". Indeed, what can be so *reasonable*, and therefore so *obligatory*, as that
"he who gave himself for us, that he might
"redeem us from all iniquity, and purify
"to himself a peculiar people ²²", should see in us "the travail of his soul, and be satisfied ²³".

2. It

²⁰ 1 Cor. vi. 20.

²² Titus ii. 14.

²¹ Rom. xii. 1.

²³ Isai. liii. 11.

2. It not only appears so reasonable, but there is a "constraining power of love shed abroad in our hearts", inclining us to and enabling us for the practice of the things which are excellent. The Holy Ghost in the Scripture so represents the love of CHRIST in his salvation to our hearts, that it constraineth us, *συμμετρεῖ*, *carrieth* us along with it as a mighty stream. For when this love is known and believed, its "breadth and length" and depth and height", ever fixed upon our hearts, *then* we cannot but love GOD again and walk before him in all holy obedience. The influence of this principle of love to produce holiness in us is evident: it is itself "the fulfilling of the Law"²⁴. But we can never reason ourselves into this love. It is the office of the Spirit not only to set before us the grounds of it in the character of a pardoning GOD, but to "direct our hearts" into the love of GOD²⁵. The Gospel becomes effectual, not merely by moral suasion, but by divine operation. This power habitually is ministered to us from CHRIST for the work of sanctification. "Out of his fulness" we receive²⁶. Our works are begun, continued

²⁴ Rom xiii. 10.

²⁵ 2 Theff iii 5.

²⁶ John i. 16.

tinued and ended in him. CHRIST (in whose hands the ministration of the Spirit is lodged) as the life of our souls, communicates to us light and love; and these dispose us to and enable us for the practice of "righteousness" and true holiness".

I would wish you never to lose sight of this source of our obedience. All our holiness is derived from above. If we see not this, our mistake will be endless; and our labour after holiness only the more estrange us from it. We shall be building a *Babel* to confound ourselves: and if hereafter we should be undeceived, shall have our work not only to begin, but our wall built with untempered mortar to pull down also.

Which brings me,

III. To consider that practice of true Holiness, which the soul "created in CHRIST" JESUS is ordained to walk in".

Holiness is "the conformity of the heart to God." It is having our will like God's will, and our ways directed by the rule of our duty. It is the answer of that emphatical petition, "Thy will be done on earth,
" as

" as it is in heaven ²⁷ ". As the proof of it goes through every the minutest action of our lives, the time would fail me to enumerate all the particulars wherein in heart and life it appears; in all holy desires and dispositions towards God, and in those works of righteousness " which are good and profitable unto men ". But it will be necessary to set before you some of its most striking parts, and beg you to judge yourselves thereby.

Let me only observe in what followeth, I would not be understood to affirm, that every true believer hath this state of perfect conformity unto God. I will not say, that any ever did on earth attain to " be perfect as " our Father which is in heaven is perfect ". But this I may venture to assert, that where-ever a soul doth not watch, and labour, and pray, and " press towards the mark, to be " holy as God is holy, in all manner of " conversation ²⁸ ", he can have very little reason to imagine himself one with CHRIST, or a real partaker in the blessings of the Gospel.

Q

The

²⁷ Matt. vi. 10.

²⁸ 1 Pet. i. 15.

The following instances of a right spirit will, wherever they are found, be gracious evidences that you are not Christians "in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth". For if you are such,

(1.) You will have a hearty approbation of the holy Law of God. Though it cannot be a covenant of life to you, it ceases not to be a Rule of Obedience, and you will acknowledge it to be "holy and just and good", however contrary to your "carnal mind, and the law of your members which warreth against it"²⁹. Far therefore from esteeming its prohibitions arbitrary, its commands severe, or its sanctions rigorous, you will say with the Psalmist, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right"³⁰. And this view will make you "delight in the Law of God after the inner man"³¹, so as to count it your greatest joy could you wholly be conformed to its blessed precepts. Your language will be, "O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep thy statutes"³².

(2.) You

²⁹ Rom. vii. 23.

³¹ Rom. vii. 22.

³⁰ Psal. cxix. 128.

³² Psal. cxix. 5.

(2) You will have a single eye to please God in all you do. This shews there is written upon your heart, ³³ Holiness unto the ³³ LORD ³³. If you are CHRIST's, you will have the ³³ simplicity which is in CHRIST ³³. An eye directed straight forwards, and examining, ³³ what will the LORD have me to do ³³? A sincere desire to please him in all things: a constant regard to the prints of his feet, and a purpose of soul to follow him in the narrow path of strict universal obedience. For ³³ he ³³ that saith he abideth in him, must himself ³³ walk as CHRIST also walked ^{33 33}. And where this is the case, you will find a daily increasing victory over the world; and a growing purpose never to turn to the right hand or to the left after any of the *golden baits*, which Pleasure, Gain or Honour may strew around you, in order to catch your eye and ensnare your heart. And hereby you ³³ will keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man ^{34 33}; at least it will be your daily study to do so. In order to which you can allow yourself in the commission of no known sin, or the omission of any known duty, but inquiring ³³ what is that good and

Q 2

³³ perfect

³³ 1 John ii. 6.

³⁴ Acts xxiv. 16.

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“ perfect and acceptable will of God³⁵ “; you will be not only “ a hearer, but a doer of it³⁶ “. You will be able to appeal to the heart-searching God, that “ his Law is your de- “ light³⁷ “. You will have confidence to- wards him, in the consciousness of an un- feigned intention to please him; and it will give you habitual satisfaction that your soul is right with him, whilst you can thus say, “ Search me, O LORD, and try the ground “ of my heart; prove me and examine my “ thoughts: look well if there be any way of “ wickedness in me; and lead me in the way “ everlasting³⁸ “. Yea it will be the very “ joy “ and rejoicing of your heart “ to be assured, “ that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not “ with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God “ you have your conversation in the world³⁹ “.

(3.) If Holiness be in your heart, then you will feel with a most tender sensibility the least thing which would grieve God’s holy Spirit in you. Your conscience will be as the apple of your eye. Have you never felt the acute pain that but a particle of dust occasions, when irritating the coats of that tender

³⁵ Rom. xii. 2.

³⁷ Psal. cxix. 70.

³⁹ 2 Cor. i. 12.

³⁶ James i. 25.

³⁸ Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

tender organ, and observed the carefulness you used to prevent such an accident, or your solicitude to remove it? Such is the sensibility in the soul of a believer with regard to sin: the eye of his spiritual mind cannot suffer *beams* there; it must destroy his faculty of vision soon: no outward notorious sins can possibly be indulged. If a "presumptuous sin" ever gets dominion over him, it darkens "all his hopes towards God, and its dire effects within are too sadly evident. It usually for the time blinds the eyes and hardens the heart: but a *mote* will be grievous to the holy soul. He counts nothing little which is offensive to the pure "eyes of that God with whom he hath to do". Hence the very thoughts of his heart are under restraint. A sudden evil imagination afflicts him: "If, says he, "I regard iniquity within, shall not God search it out? For he knoweth the very secrets of the heart"⁴⁰". He fain would keep himself pure in heart, and have "a house swept and garnished" continually to welcome the divine inhabitant of his soul.

(4.) This will make you, if you are true-hearted, very careful to "abstain from all

Q 3

"approaches

⁴⁰ Psal. xlii. 21.

“ approaches to evil ⁴¹. Can a man take
 “ fire in his bosom and his clothes not be
 “ burned ⁴² ^{ss}? No more may you presume
 to put yourself into the way of temptation.
 The vices themselves may shock you, when
 the steps which lead to them appear inno-
 cent. It is often said, “ What harm can there
 “ be in this? ” When, in fact, all the harm
 which usually overwhelms us comes from
 small and unperceived beginnings. “ The
 “ beginning of sin is as the breaking out of
 “ water ⁴³ ^{ss}. If once a small breach is made,
 every drop which passes through widens it.
 The *innocent Amusements*, as they are called, the
necessary Business of the world, and *customary*
Civilities of it, seem very allowable, nay laud-
 able; and yet I may venture to affirm, that
 more souls perish by what appears to be law-
 ful, than by what is acknowledged to be vi-
 cious. If you would be pure in heart there-
 fore, the pleasures of sense, however in-
 nocent; the things of the world, however
 needful; and the respect of it, however de-
 sirable, must be regarded with a jealous eye.
 We may not “ go out of the world ”; but we
 can be scarcely too sparing of the pleasures of
 it;

⁴¹ 1 Thess. v. 22.⁴² Prov. vi. 27.⁴³ Prov. xvii. 14.

it; too careful over the engagements of it; and too much weaned from its regards. We must be "in the world"; but the believing soul will not be "of the world".

(5.) Where true Holiness is in the heart, there will be an abiding desire after its increase and perfection. Wherever a soul begins truly to love God, he will desire to love him more; and as he advances, his longings increase. A heart united to JESUS never thinks he can love him too much, or serve him too well: but he pants after higher degrees day by day; "forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forward to those that are before"⁴⁴. It is true, that "through the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright;" "we know but in part"⁴⁵; we love but in part; we obey but in part; but this our state of imperfection is our grief. We would be like God. We would be no longer ungrateful to him. We would be "holy as he is holy in all manner of conversation". This is the spring of all those ardent prayers, that jealous self-examination, that desire of reproof, that serious inquiry into God's mind and will,

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which

⁴⁴ Phil. iii. 13.

⁴⁵ 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

which is the Christian's daily walk. And so doing he doth ^{ss} increase with the increase of ^{ss} God, going on unto perfection ^{46 ss}.

(6.) The soul renewed in Holiness aspires after its absolute and intire completion in heaven. Heaven is the place of Holiness: it is the essence of that happy state, that there all ^{ss} that is in part is done away, and that ^{ss} which is perfect is come ⁴⁷. We therefore ^{ss} that are in this tabernacle do groan earnestly, desiring to be absent from the body, ^{ss} that we may be present with the LORD ⁴⁸. ^{ss} For then seeing him as he is, we shall be ^{ss} like him ^{49 ss}. The man after GOD's own heart shews how he was, and we ought to be affected: ^{ss} My soul is athirst for GOD, ^{ss} yea, even for the living GOD; when shall I ^{ss} come to appear in the presence of GOD ^{50 ss}? The chased roe, panting before its pursuers, and parched with heat and thirst, longed not more for the cooling stream, than his soul longed for this blessed state of happiness. All besides was little in his eye; his crown, his victories, his wealth, his fame, his honours, were trifles compared to this; he was content to

⁴⁶ Coloss. ii. 19.

⁴⁷ 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

⁴⁸ 2 Cor. v. 4, 5, 6.

⁴⁹ 1 John iii. 2.

⁵⁰ Psal. xlii. 2.

to part with them; he found no satisfaction in them; they were not his portion; one mighty longing filled his soul; and it was this, to "awake up in the fulness of God's likeness, and then he knew he should be satisfied with it" ⁵¹ ⁵².

Happy will it be for you, brethren, if such as I have described be the temper of your soul. You may then be assured you are alive to God; or in the language of *St Paul*, "you live, yet not you, but CHRIST liveth in you" ⁵² ⁵³. This is *true Holiness*, and as distinct from all the daubings of Pharisaical outside or hypocritical delusion, as the genuine brilliant differs from imitative paste. These are the works which "God hath before ordained that we should walk in them".

I would conclude at present with these two cautions.

1. Beware of mistaking mere external Works for true Holiness. Holiness is seated in the heart; every act receives its goodness from the principle from which it flows, and the end to which it is directed. The external works of the generally esteemed devout, decent

⁵¹ Psal. xvii. 15.

⁵² Gal. ii. 20.

decent and charitable, are usually as far from being acts of real Holiness as any of the works of the openly children of disobedience: they proceed from as unrenewed hearts, from as unchristian tempers, and are directed to as un sanctified ends.

You may attend your church twice on a *Sunday*. You may go on week-days too. You may frequent the Sacrament. You may say Prayers in your house and alone. You may read the Psalms and Lessons for the day. You may be "no extortioner or unjust". You may be in many things unlike other men; neither given to swear, nor drink, nor lewdness, nor extravagance. You may be a tender parent, a careful master, and what the world calls an honest man: yea, you may withal be very liberal to the poor; be regarded in the world as a pattern of piety and charity, and respected as one of the *best sort* of people in it; and yet, with all this, be the very character which, "though highly
"esteemed among men, is an abomination
"in the sight of God"⁵³.

For if you have never seen your "desper-
"ately wicked heart", been united to CHRIST
by

by Faith, and received from him newness of life; if you know not experimentally what is meant by "fellowship with the Father and his "Son JESUS CHRIST"; if your devotion hath not been inspired "by Faith which worketh "by love"; if your worship hath not been "in "Spirit and in truth"; from a real sense of your wants, and an earnest desire and expectation of receiving from him "in whom all "fulness dwells": if this hath not been your case, your devotions have been unmeaning ceremony; your book not your heart hath spoken; and the tinkling cymbal of sound, not the fervent effectual desire of prayer, hath come from your lips. "Bring no more "vain oblations"⁵⁴ ". Though you should thus read and kneel, and pray all the days of your life, you will never have offered one spiritual service. These your very attendances on forms and ordinances are your delusion and condemnation.

Your *decent conduct* proceeds not from a sense of "the love of GOD which is in JESUS "CHRIST our LORD". You have never felt any thing of its constraining influence; nor have you a heart really hating iniquity as
such,

⁵⁴ Isai. i. 13]

such. But open vices may be inconvenient to you, may blast your reputation, affect your business, or hurt your pride, (for pride is at the bottom of all self-made holiness) and therefore you abstain from them. While these two things you do, you love this present world, desire its esteem, its gain or its gratifications; and you hate the image of God in the children of his grace. You dislike their self-denied conduct: you cannot bear the light of their holy lives; you are provoked when they would unsettle you from your false bottom of formality. You think you are good enough already. You seem to fear being *over-righteous* more than the "blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST". And if this be so, believe it, you are an utter stranger to vital godliness. Your heart is unhumbled and unholy; and all your ornamental shew is but gilding the coffin of a corps, or whiting your sepulchre. "You must be born again"⁵⁵, if you would "bring forth fruit unto God".

Nor think that you are *charitable*, if the love of JESUS and his brethren be not purely the motive of your gifts. A naturally generous

⁵⁵ John iii. 7.

rous heart, a tenderness of constitution, a desire of being thought well of, or rather the fear of being thought niggardly, may draw from you a pittance of your store, or some more considerable benefaction in your life; or at your death may be dispensed as you hope "to cover the multitude of sins"^{*}. But is this charity? Alas! you might not only give your superfluities, but "bestow *all* your "goods to feed the poor", you might even "give your body to be burned for them"; and yet be utterly destitute of charity⁵⁶. If self-seeking, self-pleasing, or self-ends guide you, (and guide you they must, until "the "love of God be by the HOLY GHOST shed "abroad in your heart"⁵⁷ ss.) Though you had defrauded others of the money you have given, you had not more effectually transgressed against the law of love.

Let every soul look well within. It is easy to be deceived; thousands are so. "The form "of godliness" many hold; "the power of it" few. Be ye of those few.

2. As far removed from real Holiness are they who have only learnt right notions of Religion,

* See the note in the fifth Sermon, page 104.

⁵⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

⁵⁷ Rom. v. 5.

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Religion, but whose hearts have not yet been influenced by them. It is a very common case this. By education we may have had true principles instilled into our understandings: or afterwards by our connections, acquaintance and attachment to those who profess godliness, we may have learnt their mode of speaking, and adopted their sentiments; and this too from a speculative conviction of the truth. Hence we may run to hear the Gospel, contend for the Ministers of it, know how duties should be performed, discover the vanity of formality, be ready to rebuke the Pharisee, yea have a zeal for the truth, even to suffer for it persecution and loss. And all this may be accompanied with the appearance of spirituality, with fervors of devotion, a readiness to pray with others, and various gifts of knowledge and utterance. Withal, the conduct may be reformed, outwardly irreproachable; and yet the heart be neither truly for nor with God. Yea farther, it is certainly more than possible even to have been the means of saving others souls and to lose our own: and after all, to be only near the kingdom of God and never enter into it; "almost but not altogether Christians".

We

We may not have hated sin as sin, and because God hates it; nor loved holiness as holiness, and because God delights in it: our views may have been merely to our own advantage, to avoid hell or to gain heaven; (views right enough in their proper place) whilst at the bottom of our hearts we have not been actuated by a desire of God's glory; influenced by virtue derived from the living head; nor been constrained in the beginning, continuance and end of our conduct, by the real experience of our Saviour's love.

Self-deceit is deeply rooted in our hearts. We cannot be too jealous over them. The most holy will be the most inquisitive; most careful to fix their eye " on JESUS the author " and finisher of his salvation " in them; and then to be bringing forth " those works of " faith and labours of love " which He will remember in the day of his appearance and glory.



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S E R M O N XI.

The Fruits of the Spirit.



EPHESIANS V. 9.

*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness
and righteousness.*



W H E N we were infants, we were by baptism admitted into the family of God; we were received into the bosom of the Church; and were regarded as disciples of the religion of JESUS. We then partook of the seals of the covenant, and engaged by the mouths of our sponsors, as soon as we came to years of discretion, "to walk worthy of our high vocation and calling." It was prayed for us, "that all carnal affections might die in us; "and that all things belonging to the Spirit "might live and grow in us¹." The conti-

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nued

¹ Baptismal Service.

nued assistance of the Holy Ghost was implored to enable us to be faithful to the vows we had made; and we were solemnly admonished to remember our promise and profession, which was to “follow the example of “our Saviour CHRIST, and to be made like “unto him².” As we come to years of discretion, it becomes us seriously to examine, whether we are walking according to these engagements; since it is on this depends the final accomplishment of the promises then on God’s part made to us. Else if we break our vows, “our circumcision becomes uncircumcision”; our Baptism can profit us nothing, we shall continue, as we were born, “children of wrath³”, and inherit the curse instead of the blessing. Here then is the question; Am I now a child of God? and it is resolvable by another, “Am I led by the “Spirit of God? For as many as are led by “the Spirit of God, they are the sons of “God⁴”. And these leadings are evident by the fruits. “The fruit of the Spirit is in “all goodness and righteousness”. If this be our state, well; else we are like the ingrafted branch which never incorporated with the tree,

² Baptismal Exhortation.³ Ephes. ii. 3.⁴ Rom. viii. 14.

tree, ⁵ dried up and withered, whose only
⁶ use is to be gathered and cast into the fire
⁷ and burned ⁸.

Let every man try what spirit he is of.
⁹ Many false spirits are gone forth into the
¹⁰ world ¹¹. There is a fallen spirit, boasting
of its virtues, which is ¹² enmity against God ¹³.
There is ¹⁴ a spirit of the world ¹⁵, well re-
ceived and generally well spoken of, which is
contrary to CHRIST. And there is a spirit of
darkness, who assumes ¹⁶ the garb of light ¹⁷,
and fathers his impositions on those ¹⁸ who
¹⁹ have no pleasure in the truth, but have
²⁰ pleasure in unrighteousness ²¹. Hence,
some have pretended to the guidance of the
Spirit of God, whose lives were ²² earthly,
²³ sensual, devilish ²⁴; and others, whilst they
have boasted of extraordinary impulses and
communications, have departed from their
profession, and ²⁵ ended in the flesh. We must
²⁶ try the spirits whether they are of God ²⁷.
²⁸ By their fruits ye shall know them ²⁹. The
³⁰ fruits of the Spirit are these, love, joy,
³¹ peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness,
R 2 faith;

⁵ John xv. 6.⁷ Rom. viii. 7.⁹ 2 Cor. xi. 14.¹¹ 1 John iv. 1.⁶ 1 John iv. 1.⁸ 1 Cor. ii. 12.¹⁰ 2 Thess. ii. 12.¹² Matt. vij. 20.

^{ss} faith, meekness, temperance ^{13 ss}. *These* none but GOD's Spirit ever did or can produce: *these*, wherever they are, radically overturn the powers of darkness, and bring with them the full evidence of their divine origin. ^{ss} This ^{ss} hath GOD done ^{14 ss}.

We will examine these fruits a little distinctly, for in them goodness and righteousness consist.

1. *Love*. The ^{ss} first and great command-
^{ss} ment of the Law is, The love of GOD ¹⁵;
^{ss} and the next and like unto it is, To love
^{ss} our neighbour as ourselves ^{16 ss}: both these
 manifest themselves to be in the hearts of the
 children of GOD. *Love* appears in the re-
 gards shewn to the object on which it fixes.
 These are *esteem of*, *desire after*, *delight in* and
conformity with it. In the real Christian *these*
 are supremely fixed ^{ss} on GOD in CHRIST ^{ss}.
 His *esteem* of GOD will be most exalted and
 reverential: ^{ss} Whom have I in heaven but
^{ss} thee ^{ss}? His *desires* after him ardent. ^{ss} There
^{ss} is nothing upon earth I desire in compa-
^{ss} rison with thee ^{17 ss}. This is daily mani-
 fested

¹³ Gal. v. 21, 22, 23.

¹⁵ Matt. xxii. 37.

¹⁷ Psal. lxxiii. 25.

¹⁴ Psal. lxiv. 9.

¹⁶ Matt xxii. 39.

fested by his diligence to maintain communion with him in *Prayer, Meditation, the Word and Sacraments*. His *delight* in God is above all things else his chief joy. ¹⁸ My soul shall be joyful in the LORD ¹⁸: yea I will greatly ¹⁹ rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall be ²⁰ joyful in my God ²¹. His *conformity* to him is *universal* and daily increases; whilst in every good word and work it is his labour ²² to grow up into him in all things, who is ²³ the head, even CHRIST ²⁴. Doth this character suit you? Thus the Spirit works in every believer. And to his neighbour the same Spirit begets *love unfeigned*; evident in the kindest expressions of it towards his soul and body. ²⁵ Rejoicing with those that rejoice, ²⁶ and weeping with those that weep ²⁷; ready ²⁸ to distribute, willing to communicate ²⁹ to ³⁰ the necessities of the indigent ³¹: consulting all their wants and seeking to relieve them; and by instruction, admonition, reproof, consolation, chiefly diligent to advance their most important interest, that of their immortal souls. This is *Love*.

R 3

But

¹⁸ Psal. xxxv. 9.¹⁹ Isai. lxi. 10.²⁰ Ephes. iv. 15.²¹ Rom. xii. 15.²² 1 Tim. vi. 18.

But can no man be under the guidance of God's Spirit, who habitually affects other things more than GOD IN CHRIST, and who seeks not to walk in the exercise of fervent Charity? Certainly no. CHRIST saith, "He²³ that loveth any thing more than me is not²³ worthy of me²³. And we are commanded²⁴ to be always ready, if need be, to lay down²⁴ even our lives for the brethren²⁴. So that the matter comes to a short issue. What hath God's word determined? But who doth thus love God and his brother? Is not this reducing the children of God within a very narrow compass? True. But it reduces them only to the scripture declarations. *Nominally* the children of God are numerous enough, *really* they are few. Be assured if a man have not this spirit of Love, he belongs not to CHRIST.

2. *Joy.* They have very mistaken notions of the Gospel, who think the religion of it a melancholy service. It is found to be *perfect freedom* from every slavish and distressing fear, by such as enter into the true spirit of it. Other joys are vain or wicked or transitory: yea all the joys of earth and sense, when
fought

²³ Matt. x. 37.²⁴ 1 John iii. 16.

fought as a portion, quickly change into ceaseless and remediless sorrows; but the fruit of righteousness is true joy. It is a "joy in the HOLY GHOST". It flows immediately from the fountain of all blessing. It is an holy joy, tending to promote the purity of our souls: yea it is a joy "unspeakable and full of glory"²⁵. We "rejoice in the LORD," "for he is become our salvation"²⁶. In ourselves, whilst proving our own work, we see the evident effects of divine agency in every present state: "For all things work together for good to us"²⁷: in every future prospect; "Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God"²⁸. What a joy is this? subject to none of the interruptions of other joys, but possessed independent of the world. A joy that even in *afflictions*, in *temptations*, in *sorrows*, in *reproaches*²⁹, burns with an unextinguished flame.

Nor must I omit the peculiarity of it as it regards our brethren. Their prosperity brings in fresh fuel to it, as "one member of the body shares in the honour put on another"³⁰.

R 4

The

²⁵ 1 Pet i. 8.²⁶ Isa. xii. 2.²⁷ Rom. viii. 28.²⁸ Rom. v. 2.²⁹ 2 Cor. vii. 4. James i. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Acts v. 41.³⁰ 1 Cor. xii. 26.

The envious, selfish dispositions of the natural mind are mortified, and we regard their happiness as our own. Thus joy abounds, and still the Comforter enlarges the measure of it by increasing the grounds of it.

3. *Peace.* It is the Spirit's work to "create^{ss} peace^{ss}". And this he doth by "shining into^{ss} our hearts through the word, to give us the^{ss} light of the knowledge of the glory of God^{ss} in the face of JESUS CHRIST^{31 ss}". He testifies of CHRIST, brings home the record to our souls, that God in him is reconciled, and^{ss} gives us peace in believing^{32 ss}; paying us, as it were, the legacy our dying Master left us. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I^{ss} give unto you^{33 ss}". This "Peace passeth all^{ss} understanding^{34 ss}"; and the possession of it keeps our souls serene amidst all the changes of this mortal life. Thus entered into^{ss} that^{ss} kingdom which is righteousness and peace^{35 ss}, the mild dispositions of the Prince of Peace appear in our conduct. Peace is our labour here upon earth; yea, though we often dwell with those^{ss} who, when we speak for peace,^{ss} make them ready to battle^{36 ss}. We would maintain

³¹ 2 Cor. iv. 6.³² Rom. xv. 13.³³ John xiv. 27.³⁴ Phil. iv. 7.³⁵ Rom. xiv. 17.³⁶ Psal. cxx. 7.

maintain it with the whole world, by avoiding every occasion of dispute, ³⁷ giving no ³⁸ offence in any thing ³⁹; as far as lieth in ³⁸ us, living peaceably with all men ³⁹; receding in many instances from our right, rather than break this bond of unity, and often quietly suffering rather than seek a litigious redress. We would restore it where lost, by being the first to seek reconciliation; by reuniting those who are at enmity; by ³⁸ speaking those soft words which turn away ³⁹ wrath ³⁹; by every kind office which can sweeten the hearts imbibittered with variance. Thus the Holy Ghost leads. What a different Spirit from that which is in the world? There Hatred, Variance, Strife, Emulation reign; and Slander, Detraction and Malice cast about the firebrands of Dissension, seeking to ³⁸ separate very friends ³⁹. Return, O Prince of Peace, return. Diffuse this gracious Spirit in the midst of us; teach us to copy thy good-will towards men.

4. *Long-suffering.* A gracious fruit of righteousness. It is the very character of GOD. It is a part of the divine nature. Where *it* dwells, there GOD's Spirit dwells. And how greatly

³⁷ 1 Cor. x. 32.³⁸ Rom. xii. 18.³⁹ Prov. xv. 1.

greatly shall we need to exercise it? " In the
 " world we shall have tribulation ⁴⁰ " . It can-
 not be otherwise, whilst here we dwell among
 lions; " among men, whose lips are set on
 " fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows,
 " and their tongue a sharp sword ⁴¹ " . Inju-
 ries, unkindness and provocations will daily
 beset us. Our nature on this would swell
 and rage, " returning evil for evil, and rail-
 " ing for railing " . But the soul taught of
 God hath learnt a different lesson; " forbear-
 " ing one another, and forgiving one another,
 " as GOD for CHRIST's sake hath forgiven
 " us ⁴² " : and this " not until seven times, but
 " until seventy times seven ⁴³ " . It is true,
 we shall find a corrupted heart rising up and
 saying, " Do I not well to be angry " ? But
 we shall be enabled to suppress these perverse
 " motions of sin in our members " ; and set a
 guard, not only on the words of our tongue,
 or the features of our countenance, but on
 the very thoughts of our heart; that so, " not
 " only evil speaking, but all inward bitterness
 " and anger and wrath may be put away
 " from us, as becometh saints ⁴⁴ " . If we
 meet with ill usage from men without, we
 shall

⁴⁰ John xvi. 33.⁴¹ Psalm lvii. 4.⁴² Ephes. iv. 32.⁴³ Matt. xviii. 22.⁴⁴ Ephes. iv. 31.—v. 3.

shall forgive, pity and pray for them. We shall not so much as wish their hurt. We shall remember, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the LORD"⁴⁵. If we are crossed at home; (and in our own families usually lies the chief exercise of our long-suffering) if we find those who are under us perverse, self-willed, stubborn, undutiful; or those set over us imperious, haughty, and capriciously out of humour; we shall seek to overcome the one by patience, forbearance and kindness towards them; and the other, by that "yielding which pacifieth wrath"⁴⁶; by that submissiveness, that silence, which extinguishes the coals of anger. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath"⁴⁷; servants "obey your masters, not answering again"⁴⁸; are the express marks St *Paul* instances of the exercise of this blessed temper. To walk thus will shew that we have "received the Grace of God in truth", and drank into his Spirit, "who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself"⁴⁹, yet opened not his mouth, except in pity and prayer for his murderers. Need I remark how little
this

⁴⁵ Rom. xii. 19.⁴⁶ Eccles. x. 4.⁴⁷ Ephes. vi. 4.⁴⁸ Titus ii. 9.⁴⁹ Heb. xii. 3.

this spirit is seen in the world, where Rage, Impatience and Self-will disturb the earth, and raise perpetual storms?

But are none who pretend to I know not what goodness and the Spirit, as impatient and fretful as those whom they pharisaically stile their *carnal neighbours*? Perhaps they are. But their calling themselves Christians will not prove them to be such; if they have not the spirit of long-suffering, they are not of CHRIST. Their professions are but delusions, and their hope ^{ss} the hope of the hypocrite ^{ss} which perisheth ^{50 ss}.

5. *Meekness, gentleness*; these are parts of righteousness nearly allied. If they be considered separately, *Meekness* may intimate the temper, and *Gentleness* the expression of it in the conduct. This was what the blessed JESUS recommended so strongly to his disciples imitation, ^{ss} Learn of me, for I am ^{ss} meek and lowly of heart ⁵¹; and all who are ^{ss} his sheep hear his voice, and follow him ^{52 ss}; and where the temper is thus kind and softened, gentleness will speak in every word and

⁵⁰ Job viii. 13.

⁵¹ Matt. xi. 29.

⁵² John x. 27.

and action. No bitterness, or clamour, or fierce disputes will be in our lips, the law of kindness will dwell there; and words, soft as descending snows, drop from the good treasure of the heart. And in the life it will be seen; not in the ceremonious compliments of the lip and knee, not in the mere sounding professions of respect, not in the false civilities, which have no meaning or a bad one; but in the ingenuous openness of the countenance; the simplicity and sincerity of the conduct; and the unaffected benevolence towards those who we know dislike and injure us. And at *home* especially it will make us kind and courteous to all about us, tender over them, assiduous to serve them, and pleased with the task. I know no part of a Christian's conduct which makes him appear more amiable than the exercise of these graces, and which so effectually disarms the malice of "those who cruelly, disdainfully and despitefully speak against him"⁵³. Nor is the absence of this spirit but among the sad proofs of an unrenewed heart; and to be a lion in our house, and frantic among our servants, is as much an evidence of sin's dominion, as to swear or lie.

6. *Goodness.*

⁵³ Psal. xxxi. 13.

6. *Goodness.* To this word many lay pretensions, but its meaning few understand and fewer practise. Were you to hear a man of this world describe the character of *Goodness*, he would represent it as consisting in taking care of what is called the main chance; advancing somewhat in the world; paying every man his due; doing no harm; and being an honest man. And so good he flatters himself he is. Again, The goodness of pharisaical formality consists in an *exterior* of decency, devotion and charity. The regular appearance at church, or the daily service at home, with something bestowed to the relief of the necessitous, afford a *righteousness*, which, from the concurring testimony of the world, it would seem almost presumption to question. But I have before laboured to expose the folly of these pretences. The *honesty* of the worldling, and the *forms* of the devotee, have just as much *genuine goodness* in them, as the love of the world hath of heavenly-mindedness, and ignorance and pride of humility and spiritual understanding. But there is a *real goodness* which the Spirit of God works in the heart, which it becomes each soul to prove in himself. *A goodness*, not wrought by and
out

out of ourselves; (for "in us, that is, in our
"flesh, dwelleth no good thing"⁵⁴;) but the
emanation of that divine nature of which,
through the HOLY GHOST, we have been
made partakers. It consists in "the appro-
"bation and conformity of the heart to that
"law of God which is holy and just and
"good"⁵⁵." It appears in an uniform prac-
tice of "whatsoever things are excellent and
"of good report"; it makes us patterns of self-
denial, spirituality, and close walking with
God. It urges us to seek the salvation of all
men, and prompts us to every labour of love
for their souls or bodies. It acts from a prin-
ciple of pure love, and simply regards the ho-
nour of JESUS, and the good of mankind. A
goodness, which outside religion hath nothing
to do with; and the world cannot receive;
but in which the soul that is in CHRIST must
be daily exhorted to abide and abound.

7. *Faith*. This is "the fruit of the Spirit".
The word *faith* in scripture admits of diffe-
rent interpretations. Here it stands for *vera-*
city and *fidelity*: *veracity* in all our words and
promises. So far as we are in him who is the
faithful and true witness, we shall seek to
⁵⁵ speak

⁵⁴ Rom. vii. 18.⁵⁵ Rom. vii. 12.

" speak the truth from our heart ⁵⁶ ". We shall
 abhor " lying lips and a deceitful tongue ⁵⁷ ".
 We shall use " no flattering speeches ⁵⁸ "; no
 cloke of guile; but speak the truth as in his
 presence, " who searcheth the heart and the
 " reins ". A Christian's word is sacred: the
 Spirit of truth guides him. Need I observe
 then whose spirit they follow, who think good
 breeding binds them to hypocrisy, or who
 pretend the business of the world could never
 be carried on without dissimulation? That
 to ask more than they intend to take, to
 commend their merchandise above its real
 value, is allowable in trade. So true is the
 son of *Sirack's* observation, " As the nail
 " sticketh fast between the joining of the
 " stones, so doth lying between buying and
 " selling ⁵⁹ ". These are of their father the devil,
 " and the works of their father they will do."
 " He was a liar from the beginning ⁶⁰ ".

Fidelity in our engagements is here in-
 cluded in Faith. We shall be " true and
 " just in all our dealings; " " not slothful in
 " business ⁶¹ "; not needing another's eye to
 quicken our diligence; but conformable to
 the

⁵⁶ Psal. xv. 2.⁵⁷ Psal. cxx. 2.⁵⁸ 1 Theff. ii. 5.⁵⁹ Eccles. xiii. 8.⁶⁰ John viii. 44.⁶¹ Rom. xii. 11.

the confidence reposed in us, fulfilling punctually whatever we have engaged for, though we are losers by the bargain; ready to pay what we owe at the time stipulated, and acting with men as we would do with the LORD himself if he were upon earth. Why are there so many complaints of knavery, idleness, and imposition? Why can you scarcely go into a shop where you must not guard against being cheated? or employ a workman who will not neglect your business unless your eye is over him? It is because the heart is a stranger to the grace of GOD, and has none of that "fruit of the Spirit" which is in all goodness and righteousness "and truth".

8. *Temperance.* "If you walk after the Spirit, you will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh"⁶². As "your conversation will be in heaven", you will be very temperate in the use of all things upon earth. If you possess abundance, you will "use this world as not abusing it"⁶³. If your station be distinguished in life, you will not be conformed to the vain customs and fashions of it. "The pride of life, you know, is not

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" of

⁶² Gal. v. 16.⁶³ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

" of the Father, but is of the world ⁶⁴ ss. You will not measure your temperance by what others do, but by what your Bible marks out to you. If you do not abound in this world's goods, your desires will be moderate. Having " food and raiment you will be therewith " content " ss. A little will serve a pilgrim on his travels : our treasure is reserved for us in heaven. The cravings of corrupt appetite you will daily learn to mortify. You will not only abhor that " surfeiting and drunkenness, " that chambering and wantonness ", which debases men into brutes ; but you will set a guard over the first motions of those " fleshly " lusts which war against the soul ⁶⁵ ss. When you *eat*, it will be for nourishment, not for indulgence ; and you will *drink* to quench your thirst, not to gratify and inflame your appetite ; " making no provision for the flesh " to fulfil the lusts thereof ⁶⁶ ss. You will keep yourself pure ; not only abstaining from forbidden gratifications, but using those that are lawful with a holy moderation ; not going so far as you might, lest you should be led to exceed the boundary prescribed and fall into intemperance. Knowing how corrupt your nature is ; how prone to lust ; how ri-

voted

⁶⁴ 1 John ii. 16.⁶⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 11.⁶⁶ Rom. xiii. 14.

veted to the world; how fond of vanities; jealousy will be ever on the watch, and taking the alarm on the approach or appearance of excess. Thus you will ^{as} walk circumspectly, ^{as} not as fools, but as wise ⁶⁷ ^{as}.

Let me just hint, that to have the heart fixed on the vanities and fashions of the world, to be anxiously engaged in the pursuit of gain, to indulge the flesh in its cravings after meat or drink or sleep or apparel; to be at no pains to remove every provocation to excess, and to pamper, instead of beating down the body; these are the sure proofs of a soul which ^{is} sensual, not having the Spirit ⁶⁸ ^{as}.

These now are the tempers, and *this* the conduct, where ^{is} the fruit of the Spirit in all ^{as} goodness and righteousness ^{as} appears. And you are just so far the servant of our Saviour, and no farther, than these fruits manifest themselves in you. Many, even of those who profess a *spiritual* walk, deceive themselves with the vainest hopes; and though they continue under the influence of worldliness, selfishness, fretfulness and indulgence, will not

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be

⁶⁷ Ephes. v. 15.⁶⁸ Jude 19.

be persuaded that they have neither "been bap-
"tised into CHRIST, nor put on CHRIST".

May the Spirit of Grace be to them a Spirit of conviction, whilst they see the unsuitableness of their hearts and lives to the fruits of genuine righteousness!

And should not you and I, brethren, be much humbled, that these fruits, though really possessed, abound no more in us? Surely they who have the tenderest and most awakened consciences will be most affected with the view of their imperfections, and stirred up importunately to cry for fresh communications of Power and Grace to bring forth more fruit. If this effect be wrought in you, such fervent effectual prayer will be a present evidence to you, that "the Spirit of
"GOD, who helpeth our infirmities", is with you as a Spirit of supplication; and an *earnest* that he will be in you as a "Spirit of righteousness, strengthening you with all might
"in the inner man"⁶⁹", to bring forth those
"fruits unto holiness, the end of which is
"everlasting life"⁷⁰".

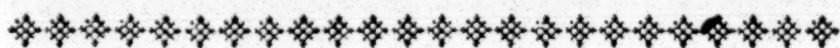
⁶⁹ Ephes. iii. 16.

⁷⁰ Rom. vi. 22.



S E R M O N X I I .

The Necessity of personal Holiness.



H E B R E W S X I I . 14.

Without holiness no man shall see the LORD.

 **A**MONG the various sects which have arisen, disturbing the peace of the Church, and debasing the purity of the Gospel, no error hath more effectually struck at the root than theirs who pervert the most glorious truths of God to establish a system of lewdness and licentiousness. *Antinomians* now in practice there have been in every age; in none, I fear, more than the present: and it is no wonder therefore that a corrupted heart hath perverted many; and brought their sentiments into a conformity with their conduct. We naturally believe what we desire. The merest shadow of an argument will pass when prejudice hath blinded the eyes. Hence, because

such as I am speaking of " have no pleasure
 " in the truth, but have pleasure in unright-
 " teousness, God hath given them over to
 " strong delusions to believe a lie " ¹. The
 most life-giving promises prove their snare,
 and the sure foundations of Grace in the
 Redeemer become to them an occasion of
 falling. In the mean time they avow a con-
 fidence of safety greater than that of other
 men. Their danger therefore is more im-
 minent, and their damnation less evitable.
 If any such should hear these words, or cast
 their eyes on these lines, I would beg them
 not to be hasty in their censures, but simply
 weigh the following arguments for personal
 Holiness, and not reject them if they are
 conclusive.

I have endeavoured to shew you in some
 measure the *nature* of Holiness, its principles
 and practice, and the particular fruits which
 grow and flourish wherever the heart is vi-
 tally united to CHRIST the living vine. Let
 no man accuse of a dangerous tendency prin-
 ciples which lead to such a conversation. If
 the enemies of the Gospel will effectually
 confute it, as they pretend to do, let them
 produce

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 11.

produce from other principles a practice that will bear this test, and hath such marks of divinity stamped upon it. It were enough to make a man smile (if the subject was not too serious) to hear the jealousy of those who have not experimentally "so much as known" if there be any HOLY GHOST"; and whose lives are wholly governed by the interests of flesh and sense, testifying their apprehensions about the decay of Morality, and their fears lest these doctrines of Grace, which enable a man to "walk as CHRIST also walked", and actually are seen to have this tendency universally on those who truly embrace them, should make good works to be neglected, or considered as unnecessary. Should the Moralist, whether Deist, Arian, Socinian or Orthodox, consider the truths which have been laid down, he will perhaps be found, with all his zeal for works, to have exceeded the professed Antinomian in true Holiness hardly so much as one *Ethiopian* exceeds his fellow in complexion. Whilst, sure I am, as many as are believers indeed will always be so powerfully wrought upon by the force of the obligations lying upon them, as by their conduct to shew forth a spirituality of temper and holiness of life, that may con-

found at least, if it doth not convince those who speak evil of their good conversation in CHRIST.

I am to shew you the absolute necessity of personal Holiness. And I shall endeavour to do it from the following arguments. May the Spirit of Holiness make them effectual to the edification of all who hear them!

First, It is one great design of God's eternal purpose and choice that we should be *holy*. There are innumerable disputes about the deep things of God's Election and Foreknowledge, which, through the heat and bitterness wherewith they have been managed, seem to have afforded rather "matter for "questions, than to have ministred godly edifying. Secret things belong unto God.² We had best leave these deep points in silence; and beginning with what is plainer, advance by degrees. When we come to heaven, the scheme of God's eternal counsels will be better known to us. But whatever Predestination or Election there be, or be not, this is certainly God's eternal decree, that the people of his Grace should "be holy as he is holy.

" For

² Deut. xxix, 29,

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“ For this he hath chosen us in CHRIST before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love ³ “. This at least is his Predetermination, that “ we should be conformed to the image of his Son ⁴ “. And “ whoever are elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, are so through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience ⁵ “. It is no essential requisite to salvation, that a man believe any absolute irrespective decrees of God ; it is no exclusion from it that he utterly rejects them : but it is essentially necessary that he finds this decree of *Holiness* fulfilled in him, and *that* whereunto he is appointed actually taking place. Without this the decree of God is certainly against him, and he hath no part nor lot in the salvation that is in JESUS.

Secondly, It is among the chief ends of CHRIST’S death, “ to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ⁶ “. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil ⁷ “. His chief work was fin.
By

³ Ephes. i. 4.

⁴ Rom. viii. 29.

⁵ 1 Peter i. 2.

⁶ Titus ii. 14.

⁷ 1 John iii. 8.

By this his dominion was upheld. JESUS, the name of our Deliverer, expresses his office: ⁸ He shall save his people from their ⁹ sins ¹⁰. He doth it by dying: thus purchasing anew a property in us, and ¹¹ redeeming us from the hands of our enemies, that ¹² we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the ¹³ days of our life ¹⁴. When he gave himself ¹⁵ for us ¹⁶, it was with this very view, ¹⁷ that ¹⁸ he might sanctify and cleanse us ¹⁹. And this he actually works in all *his* people: they are saints, holy brethren, conformed to their Head, ²⁰ a holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices ²¹. It is then as much as all our hopes are worth, that we see this great end of CHRIST's death answered in us. ²² He ²³ that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure ²⁴. If any man saith ²⁵ he hath fellowship with him, and walketh ²⁶ in darkness, he is a liar, and the truth is ²⁷ not in him ²⁸. Let no man dream of any benefit from CHRIST's death in eternity, who doth not experience the quickning, sanctifying efficacy of it in time. ²⁹ Shall we continue ³⁰ in sin that Grace may abound? God forbid.

How

⁸ Matt. i. 21.⁹ Luke i. 75.¹⁰ Ephes. v. 26.¹¹ 1 Peter ii. 5.¹² 1 John iii. 3.¹³ 1 John i. 6.

“ How shall we that are dead to sin, live any
 “ longer therein ¹⁴ “? Every real believer is
 “ crucified with CHRIST; is dead with him
 “ unto sin, that like as CHRIST was raised
 “ from the dead by the glory of the Father,
 “ he also should walk in newness of life ¹⁵ “.
 How blasphemously then do they speak, who,
 whilst by their wickedness they are “ crucify-
 “ ing the Son of GOD afresh, and putting him
 “ to open shame¹⁶, plead his death as the pre-
 scription for their iniquities, and make the
 holy One of GOD a Minister of sin?

Thirdly, The justification of a sinner by
 faith in JESUS CHRIST, necessarily binds and
 leads him to the practice of Holiness. It is
 allowed that the hatred of sin and the love of
 GOD, are the grand roots of all true Holiness;
 whatever therefore most powerfully produces
 the one, will most effectually secure the other.
 But this is peculiarly the property of Faith.
 For when can sin ever appear to us so ex-
 ceeding sinful, as when Faith leads us to the
 accursed tree, and bids us “ look upon him
 “ whom we have pierced ¹⁶ “? Where can
 GOD’s displeasure against sin so affect our
 hearts,

¹⁴ Rom. vi. 2.

¹⁵ Rom. vi. 4.

¹⁶ Zech. xii. 10.

hearts, as when we see in the strong lines
 of the Redeemer's blood, what "an evil and
 "bitter thing it is"? And where are we so
 bound, so forced to lothe ourselves and sin,
 as when we eye his bloody sacrifice and hear
 his groans, and see his mangled body, and
 look into the prints of the nails; and, as it
 were with *Thomas*, "thrust our hand into his
 "side"? Must we not then "count ourselves
 "dead indeed unto sin"¹⁷, and henceforth
 "live unto God, servants of righteousness
 "unto holiness"¹⁸? or where can God's love
 so mightily constrain us, as when Faith re-
 presents him in the glorious character of a
 pardoning God in CHRIST? What can en-
 gage our hearts to him if this doth not?
 What can bind us to walk before him and
 please him, if not this "love for him who
 "hath thus so loved us"¹⁹? God then hath
 bound us to Holiness by these strongest ties.
 He appoints Faith as the means, and Holi-
 ness as the end; he knew that true Holiness
 could be no other way produced. The ap-
 pointment therefore of the former, as the
 medium of conveying his salvation to us, is
 the proof of the necessity of the latter. And
 if

¹⁷ Rom. vi. 11.¹⁸ Rom. vi. 13.¹⁹ 1 John iv. 19.

if this effect be not wrought, our faith is delusion.

Fourthly, All the means of Grace imply the necessity of Holiness, as this is their very use, that by them "we may grow up into him in all things, who is our head, even CHRIST²⁰". Are we to "desire the sincere milk of the word"? It is that "as new-born babes we may grow thereby²¹"; that we may be "sanctified through the truth²²". Are we called upon to "pray without ceasing²³"? It is in order to receive the supply of the Spirit of Holiness for our growth in Grace, and advancement "towards the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST". Are we exhorted to christian fellowship? It is that we may "watch over one another to provoke unto love and to good works²⁴". This is the point ever aimed at, that we "may increase with the increase of God²⁵", and be "going on unto perfection²⁶".

Fifthly, We are constantly in scripture pressed to Holiness, as the issue and due improvement

²⁰ Ephes. iv. 15.

²² John xvii. 17.

²⁴ Heb. x. 24.

²⁶ Heb. vi. 1.

²¹ 1 Peter ii. 2.

²³ 1 Thess. v. 17.

²⁵ Coloss. ii. 19.

provement of all its doctrines. Whoever reads but with a cursory eye the Epistles, particularly of St *Paul*, will see how he not only intersperses occasional reflections in a way of moral inference, but always sums them up in a point, as a ground from whence to urge those practical duties which conclude all his writings. Having first established the great truth of Redemption through the blood of the Lamb, in its variety of connections and different respects with regard to GOD and us, this is his deduction; "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us
 " cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the
 " flesh and spirit, perfecting Holiness in the
 " fear of GOD ²⁷ ". Hence all the pressing exhortations that we should " walk worthy of
 " our high vocation and calling ²⁸ ; that we
 " should adorn the doctrine of GOD our Sa-
 " viour in all things ²⁹ ; that we should main-
 " tain those works which are good and pro-
 " fitable unto men ³⁰ "; and especially in our stations and relative capacities behave ourselves " as persons professing godliness "; with the most solemn injunctions on the faithful, that if any man be disobedient, if any man
 defile

²⁷ 2 Cor. vii. 1.²⁹ Titus ii. 10.²⁸ Ephes. iv. 1.³⁰ Titus iii. 8.

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defile the temple of God, if any man turn back to the love of the world, if any man walk dishonourably to this holy profession; they are "to note that man, to have no company
" with him, no not so much as to eat, but
" to regard him as a denier of the faith, and
" worse than the infidels ³¹ " around them. Let any man seriously read this, and say whether *St Paul*, though eminently an asserter of salvation by Grace, was not as strenuous an advocate for Holiness as the foremost of his colleagues.

Sixthly, That we should be holy, is the design of all the dispensations of God in his Providence. If he gives prosperity, it is that his goodness should engage our hearts to love and serve him. If he chastises, it is to purge and refine us. This is his view in the more general judgments he sends upon the nations of the world, "that the inhabitants
" thereof may learn righteousness ³² ". This is his purpose with regard to individuals.
" He chasteneth us for our profit, that we
" may be partakers of his Holiness ³³ ". The dross of base affections is designed to be consumed in the furnace of affliction, and " the
" peace-

³¹ 2 Thess. iii. 14. 1 Tim. v. 8.

³² Isai. xxvi. 9.

³³ Heb. xii. 10.

" peaceable fruits of righteousness are actually brought forth by those who are duly exercised thereby ³⁴ ". You see it is GOD's uniform design in all he doth, by his Providence as well as by his Grace, that this great effect may be produced, of being " holy in all manner of conversation ". And how are we then bound to correspond with him herein, and to improve our situation, whatever it be, to the attainment of this gracious purpose and design of GOD?

Seventhly, Holiness is of absolute necessity in order to admission into the presence of GOD. Except a man be " meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light ", he cannot partake in it. Glory and Grace only differ in degree. We have " an earnest of our inheritance " in the blessed communications and consolations which the Spirit ministers unto us. When heaven comes the full harvest only comes of what on earth we had already the first-fruits. " The pure in heart shall see GOD ³⁵ ". Whilst nothing can enter the sanctuary where his honour dwelleth, " which defileth or worketh abomination ³⁶ ". It is a strange mistake with which " the god of this

³⁴ Heb. xii. 11.³⁵ Matt. v. 8.³⁶ Rev. xxi. 27.

"this world blinds the minds of those who believe not", that they may get "to heaven at last, though their heart and lives should not be so strict and holy as the Scriptures enjoin them to be." But suppose it possible: What would an unholy soul do in heaven? What happiness could he taste from the glory and service of that blessed place, whilst under a total incapacity to relish the least measure of their joys? To be ever loving, admiring, praising the blessed God, to be following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, to be employed day and night without ceasing in his temple, to be in the nearest and tenderest communion of soul with him, and with the adoring saints and angels, our brethren and companions; what happiness can you possibly have in these exercises, if *now* they are irksome, your aversion, and your burden? If *now* your conversation be *on earth*, not *in heaven*, if *now* you are living in the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense, and not by Faith; if *now* you are "serving foolish and hurtful lusts", instead of "presenting your body, soul and spirit a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God"³⁷; if *now* you are seeking happiness in the vanities of time, instead

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of

³⁷ Rom. xii. 1.

of looking forward to the riches of eternity; if *now* the company of God's people and their employments you disrelish and avoid; if *here* you are content to take up your abode, and cannot say, that "to depart and to be with" CHRIST is far better³⁸ " " ; if earthly, sensual, devilish tempers now reign in you, instead of the pure, peaceable, holy, heavenly, Christ-like dispositions of the child of God; you may be assured there is no entrance for you into the presence of God; you are under an absolute incapacity of drawing near to him; you have, you can have no idea of or relish for the happiness of the saints; you can be no more sensible to it than the blind to the beauties of vision, or the deaf to the powers of harmony. But,

Eighthly, Without Holiness you are not only incapable of seeing God and enjoying him, but you are actually and by express sentence excluded from it. "When the Son of man shall" come, he shall send forth his holy angels, and "gather out of his kingdom all things which" offend, and which do iniquity, and shall "cast them into a furnace of fire"³⁹. No evil "shall dwell with him"⁴⁰. Sin and exclusion
from

³⁸ Phil. i. 23.³⁹ Matt. xiii. 42.⁴⁰ Psal. v. 4.

from his presence, are necessarily connected.
 " They who obey not his Gospel must be de-
 " stroyed with the brightness of his coming ⁴¹.
 " He that committeth sin is of the devil ⁴² ^{ss}.
 By such disobedience against God he testifies
 what master he hath chosen to serve; and
 his wages will be as his work: " The wages
 " of sin is death ⁴³ ^{ss}. They who join with
 God's enemies will have their portion with
 them, in the " everlasting fire prepared for
 " the devil and his angels ⁴⁴ ^{ss}. All pleas in
 the great day of the LORD will be fruitless, if
 the heart hath been the servant of sin. To
 have cried, LORD, LORD, in his temple; to
 have heard the voice of CHRIST in our streets;
 yea, to have prophesied in his name, and done
 many wonderful works, will avail nothing, if
 Holiness hath not been our temper and prac-
 tice. He will say to every unholy soul in that
 day, " Depart from me, I never knew you,
 " ye workers of iniquity ⁴⁵ ^{ss}.

These are clear and convincing proofs of
 the absolute necessity of being *holy* here, in
 order to be happy hereafter; and should lead
 every man into the most serious inquiries into

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his

⁴¹ 2 Theff. ii. 8.

⁴² 1 John iii. 8.

⁴³ Rom. vi. 23.

⁴⁴ Matt. xxv. 41.

⁴⁵ Luke xiii. 27.

his state and temper. ^{ss} The righteous scarcely
^{ss} are saved; and where then shall the ungodly
^{ss} and the sinner appear ^{46 ss}?

I shall conclude with these observations.

1. If personal Holiness be so absolutely necessary, ^{ss} how few will be saved? Strait indeed
^{ss} is the gate, and narrow is the way which
^{ss} leadeth unto life, and few there be that
^{ss} find it ^{47 ss}. It is often charged as a matter
of great *uncharitableness*, but to confess your
faith in what God hath thus so solemnly de-
clared. Every one hopes to be *saved* at last;
and that, *at least*, those are safe who are not
worse than themselves. But this is the blind-
ness of the unholy, and the false ^{ss} hope of
^{ss} the hypocrite which perisheth ^{ss}. God's
word is the only standard. To this must
each man's state be referred. He requires
of all real Holiness, ^{ss} out of a pure heart, and
^{ss} good conscience, and faith unfeigned ^{48 ss}.
And to this, it is evident, few can make any
just pretensions. ^{ss} The unrighteous shall
^{ss} not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not
^{ss} deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters,
^{ss} nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers
^{ss} of

⁴⁶ 1 Pet. iv. 18.

⁴⁷ Matt. vii. 14.

⁴⁸ 1 Tim. i. 5.

“ of themselves with mankind, nor thieves,
 “ nor covetous, nor drunkards; nor revilers,
 “ nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom
 “ of GOD ⁴⁹ “ . Now were but these alone
 excluded, (and excluded they must be, as GOD
 is true) I fear the remainder who walk not
 in any of these things will be but few. More
 especially if we add unto them, “ all who
 “ walk in hatred, variance, emulations, wrath,
 “ strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders,
 “ revelings and such like ⁵⁰ “ : we shall still
 reduce the number less. But there are other
 exprefs exclusions from GOD set upon “ the
 “ fearful and unbelieving and abominable,
 “ and all liars ⁵¹ “ . Nor are they less re-
 moved from him, “ who are lovers of their
 “ own selves, boasters, proud, blasphemers,
 “ disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
 “ traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of plea-
 “ sure more than lovers of GOD ⁵² “ . In short,
 “ the profaners of GOD’s sabbath, the disho-
 “ nourers of his name, the neglecters of his
 “ worship ⁵³ “ , come under the same con-
 demnation. Nor must we forget that nume-
 rous generation, “ who are pure in their own
 “ eyes, yet are not washed from their filthi-

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“ ness;

⁴⁹ 1 Cor. vi. 9.

⁵⁰ Gal. v. 20.

⁵¹ Rev. xxi. 8.

⁵² 2 Tim. iii. 4.

⁵³ Exod. xx. 7—10.

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⁵⁴ nefs ⁵⁴; who have the form of godliness,
⁵⁵ but deny the power of it ^{55 55}. I might add,
lastly, the unfaithful to their convictions,
those ⁵⁵ who love the praise of men more
⁵⁵ than the praise of God ^{56 55}; those ⁵⁵ who put
⁵⁵ their trust in man, and their heart departeth
⁵⁵ from the LORD ^{57 55}. The lukewarm, ⁵⁵ nei-
⁵⁵ ther hot nor cold ^{58 55}, that halt between
God and *Baal*; and every man who hath
not learned ⁵⁵ to deny himself, to take up
⁵⁵ his cross and follow CHRIST ^{59 55}, in all that
holy conversation and godliness which you
have heard described. And will not the con-
clusion from these premises be, that ⁵⁵ there
⁵⁵ are few which shall be saved ^{60 55}? A rem-
nant indeed, like that in the ark, or those
plucked out of *Sodom*.

Let no man be offended at this truth, and
attend to the infidel reasonings of his corrupt
heart about unpromised mercy; but simply
regard these express scriptures. They are
God's word. ⁵⁵ Heaven and earth shall pass
⁵⁵ away, but one jot or one tittle of his word
⁵⁵ shall never pass away until the whole be
⁵⁵ fulfilled.

⁵⁴ Prov. xxx. 12.

⁵⁶ John xii. 43.

⁵⁸ Rev. iii. 16.

⁶⁰ Luke xiii. 23.

⁵⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 5.

⁵⁷ Jer. xvii. 5.

⁵⁹ Matt. x. 38.

^{ss} fulfilled ^{61 ss}. There are no secret exceptions.
^{ss} God cannot alter the thing which is gone
^{ss} out of his mouth ^{62 ss}. He must *deny himself*,
 if any soul, continuing and dying in any of
 these things, be ever finally saved. But ^{ss} God
^{ss} cannot lie ⁶³. His truth abideth for ever
^{ss} in heaven ^{64 ss}. The unholy must be eter-
 nally unhappy. ^{ss} Without Holiness no man
^{ss} shall see the LORD ^{ss}. What an awakening
 admonition!

2. What reason then hath every man to
 look well to his heart? ^{ss} Be not deceived,
^{ss} God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man
^{ss} soweth, that shall he also reap ^{65 ss}. It is re-
 quisite that we ^{ss} strive for the mastery ^{ss}, that
 we ^{ss} press towards the mark ^{ss}, that we ^{ss} be
^{ss} temperate in all things ^{ss}, that ^{ss} we work
^{ss} out our salvation with fear and trembling ^{ss},
 that ^{ss} we bring forth daily fruits meet for re-
^{ss} pentance, and make our profiting appear ^{ss},
 if we mean to come into the presence of the
 most High and most Holy. It is not a hasty
 resolution, a warm impression, a partial re-
 formation, a round of duties, or a name
 of godliness, which will bring us thither.

T 4

^{ss} GOD

⁶¹ Matt. xxiv. 35.

⁶² Psal. lxxxix. 34.

⁶³ Titus i. 2.

⁶⁴ Psal. cxix. 89.

⁶⁵ Gal. vi. 7.

⁵⁵ God requireth truth in our inward parts ⁶⁶⁵⁵; he calls for our *heart* ⁶⁷; and that chearful, universal, abiding continuance in well-doing, which shews ⁵⁵ his service to be perfect freedom ⁵⁵; and obedience our choice and delight.

And here, if we are sincere with God, we shall have abundant cause to humble ourselves, ⁵⁵ to strengthen the things which ⁵⁵ remain ⁵⁵, to examine ourselves closely, to watch against ⁵⁵ a deceitful and desperately wicked heart ⁵⁵, and to be looking up for continual supplies of Grace, to ⁵⁵ perfect in ⁵⁵ us that which is lacking ⁵⁵, and to finish the new creation, until the LORD of our life ⁵⁵ shall ⁵⁵ present us before the presence of his glory, ⁵⁵ with exceeding great joy, without spot or ⁵⁵ wrinkle, or any such thing, in perfect conformity to his own blessed image ⁵⁵.

3. As many as have made any attainments in Holiness should, with humble acknowledgments of his Grace to whom they are indebted for all, ⁵⁵ walk by the same rule, and ⁵⁵ mind the same things ⁶⁸. For we have not ⁵⁵ yet attained, or are already perfect ⁶⁹ ⁵⁵.

Whilst

⁶⁶ Psal. li. 6.

⁶⁷ Prov. xxiii. 26.

⁶⁸ Phil. iii. 16.

⁶⁹ Phil. iii. 12.

Whilst we are on our pilgrimage, two things especially we need to abound in, Humility and Zeal.

First, Humility. "For what have we that we have not received? and if we have received it, why should we glory as though we had not received it ⁷⁰?" Whatever we are, "it is by the Grace of God we are what we are ⁷¹". We are his workmanship. The whole is from him, by him, and must be ascribed to him. Besides, the remainders of our old nature afford us daily cause of abasement before God, and call upon us to say continually, even in our highest attainments, "I am nothing."

Secondly, Zeal. For when Holiness is the aim, we cannot be too zealously affected. We need not fear excess here. We cannot love God too much, or serve him beyond the bounds of duty. An unbounded field is before us. "God's commandments are exceeding broad ⁷²". Blessed are they who keep them with their whole heart ⁷³, and labour for this as the "one thing needful", that every

⁷⁰ 1 Cor. iv. 7.

⁷² Psal. cxix. 96.

⁷¹ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

⁷³ Psal. cxix. 2.

every hour they advance towards the kingdom, they may grow into a greater meetness for it; until all their fervent effectual prayers and labours are answered, "the kingdom comes"; and perfect Holiness and perfect Happiness, in God and with God, become their everlasting portion.



SERMON



S E R M O N XIII.

The Means of Holiness.



2 P E T E R I. 10.

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.



HAVE been endeavouring to set before you the nature, and to convince you of the necessity of Holiness. A task in these days the more needful, when by some persons Vice is called Virtue; when in others Satan is ^{ss} transformed into an angel of light^{ss}; and when most people act as if indeed "heaven was open for all men," and ^{ss} the gate no longer ^{ss} strait or the way narrow. Beware that ye ^{ss} also be not led away by the error of the ^{ss} wicked¹. Let the word of CHRIST dwell ^{ss} in you richly^{2 ss}. Bring every assertion to be proved thereby; every doctrine to its test; every

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 17.

² Coloss. iii. 16.

every prescription for your conduct to its commands. " If any speak not according
 " to this Rule there is no light in them ³ ss. You will then find that the great end God
 proposes is, " that the man of God should
 " be perfect, thoroughly furnished for every
 " good work ⁴ ss; and you will receive kindly
 the exhortation and set diligently about the
 practice of his commandments; and earnestly
 endeavour to " work out your own salvation
 " with fear and trembling ⁵ : giving all dili-
 " gence to make your calling and election
 " sure ⁶ ss. The means and the end are inseparably connected. Though " God worketh
 " in us to will and to do of his good pleasure ⁷,
 " and every good and every perfect gift com-
 " eth from above ⁸ ; yet must we " be workers
 " together with God". He does not act upon
 us as machines, but as men stirs us up to *labour, strive, wrestle, press* towards the mark.
 Our diligence must not be the less, because it
 is his power alone which can strengthen our
 weakness; but the greater, because he will
 give more grace to those who improve the
 measure he hath bestowed on them. " Be
 " strong therefore in the LORD, and in the
 " power

³ Isai. viii. 20.⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 17.⁵ Phil. ii. 12.⁶ 2 Pet. i. 10.⁷ Phil. ii. 13.⁸ James i. 17.

" power of his might ⁹ ". God hath himself pointed out the way wherein we should go, and promised his blessing upon the diligent use of the means. Our business therefore is to be found waiting upon God in his instituted way. And so doing we shall not fail to " grow in grace, through the more abundant supply of the Spirit of CHRIST ministered unto us ¹⁰ ".

Whoever then would increase in Holiness, and be growing up into his image in all things, " who is our Head, even CHRIST ¹¹ ", must be found in the use of the following means of Grace; namely, diligent attention to God's word, meditation upon it, examination by it, prayer, mutual communication, and solemn covenanting with CHRIST at his table.

First, A chief means of Grace is the word of God heard or read. Its promises must constrain us, its threatenings over-awe us, its commands direct, its prohibitions restrain us. But this effect cannot be produced farther than our hearts are attentive to it. If
then

⁹ Ephes. vi. 10.

¹⁰ Phil. i. 19.

¹¹ Ephes. iv. 15.

then we know not the scriptures, we must err from the way, and our conduct be guided by other maxims than the truth of God. And this is indeed the ground of all our sin and misery, that we have left the Oracles of divine Revelation, to follow the devices of our corrupted hearts. ^{ss} To the word therefore, ^{ss} and to the testimony. Search the scriptures ^{12 ss}. This is the way to eternal life. And this must be done *diligently*. The matters they contain are infinitely important to us, and deserve our deepest attention. When you read the scriptures therefore, you must ^{ss} seek for the truth as for silver, and ^{ss} search for it as for hid treasures ^{13 ss}. Your eyes ^{ss} must prevent the night-watches ^{ss} to be occupied in the blessed work; that you may know God's will and walk in it. You should do it *thoroughly*. ^{ss} All scripture is given ^{ss} by inspiration of God ^{ss}. From the Alpha to the Omega we are to consider the precious truths, as all of them ^{ss} profitable for reproof, ^{ss} for correction, for instruction in righteousness ¹⁴. And to compare spiritual things ^{ss} with spiritual ^{15 ss}. And this *daily*. The word of God must be our continual study.

^{ss} O how

¹² John v. 39.¹³ Prov. ii. 4.¹⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 16.¹⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 13.

³³ O how I love thy law, all the day long is
³³ my study in it ¹⁶³³. For this the *Bereans* were
so highly commended, that ³³ they searched
³³ the scriptures daily ¹⁷³³. Indeed what is so
proper, what so needful for us as this, that
we should begin our days with inquiring at
GOD's mouth, and conclude them with his
counsel? For ³³ when thou sleepest it shall
³³ keep thee, and when thou awakest it shall
³³ talk with thee ¹⁸³³. Add also, *seriously*. The
matter is weighty; eternity depends upon it.
It is GOD's voice is heard. Let the heart
stand in awe of him. Mr *Boyle* had so great
a reverence for GOD's word, that he used to
read it upon his knees. We should at least
feel a temper as deeply serious as that posture
implied: and withal *humblly*. ³³ Speak, LORD,
³³ for thy servant heareth ³³, must be our lan-
guage. Not caviling, but obeying; not cu-
rious, but submissive: then shall we find the
power of GOD present in his word, and its ef-
fects upon our hearts weighty and influential.
We shall daily be cast into its mold; and GOD's
holy word will produce holy tempers in us.

Secondly, Let your meditations thereon be
sweet and frequent, if you would grow
thereby.

¹⁶ Psal. cxix. 97.¹⁷ Acts xvii. 11.¹⁸ Prov. vi. 22.

thereby. It is having the truth rooted in our hearts, (as the seed covered up fixes in the ground) that makes it bring forth fruit unto Holiness. Many hearers of the word, ¹⁹ like men beholding their natural face in the glass, go away straight and forget what manner of persons they were ¹⁹. But we are charged ²⁰ to keep these words in our hearts, ²¹ to talk of them when we sit in our house, ²² and when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise up ²⁰. It is by ²³ setting God in his word always before us, that we shall not be moved ²⁴. It is for want of this that the devil so often cometh and taketh the word, ²⁵ like the seed which fell by the way side ²⁶, out of our hearts ²⁷. Treasure up the truths you read and hear. Go forth with this for your meditation through the day. See whether you can say with the Prophet, ²⁸ Thy words were found by me, and ²⁹ I did eat them; and thy word was unto ³⁰ me the joy and rejoicing of my heart ³¹. What digestion is to our food, that is meditation to the word; it makes it incorporate into our substance, and minister nourishment, strength and consolation to us.

Thirdly,

¹⁹ James i. 24.

²⁰ Deut. vi. 7.

²¹ Matt. xiii. 4.

²² Jer. xv. 16.

Thirdly, Call your heart often to deep and serious examination by it. "Prove your
 "ownelves, know your ownelves"²³", is the apostolic injunction, and most highly necessary if you would "increase with the increase
 "of God". Our corrupt and deceitful hearts have need of the most jealous eye over them, lest they turn aside from the path of holiness. We thus discover the beginnings of sin, and detect the insinuations of error; and "by
 "searching and trying our ways we return
 "unto the LORD"²⁴. Hereby we see where our hearts are weakest, that we may put an especial guard on that side; what graces we most need to exercise; what are the dangers of our place, temper and stations; what "the
 "sins that most easily beset us", and what requests we have particularly to make unto him,
 "out of whose fulness we may receive power
 "and grace".

This business should be done at least once in the day, and the most suitable time is at even, when we review the transactions that have past. We should blame the Merchant or considerable Tradesman, whose negligence deferred to keep account daily of his profit

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and

²³ 2 Cor. xiii. 5.²⁴ Lam. iii. 40.

and loss: nor could we think, without fair and regular reckonings, his business likely to flourish. No more can our souls grow in grace without the like diligence in our spiritual concerns; which, as they are of so much greater moment to us, deserve so much greater inspection and inquiry into them. I cannot wonder that many professors so decline, "that gray hairs are upon them and they know it not"²⁵, when they are so negligent about this matter, so superficial in their inquiries about their progress, and so easily satisfied with themselves, though their profiting appeareth not. Yea, when most they need to look into themselves for humiliation and conviction, like men in debt, they decline the search, because they are afraid to know the reality of their state. It is a bad sign when we want not to go to the bottom of our hearts, to know the very truth of our case, that we may present it before the LORD. Like the spreading cancer, such declensions threaten apostasy throughout. "*Principiis obsta*; Resist the beginnings:" is a maxim as applicable to our souls as to our bodies. Whilst they will be most alive to God, and walk nearest with him, who bring their hearts
closest

²⁵ Hosea vii. 9.

closest to be tried by his word, and most carefully remark every deviation from it.

Fourthly, Prayer is an especial means of growing in Holiness. I may call it indeed the chief. It is, as it were, the Key of heaven which unlocks the treasures of Grace. All Holiness is derived from the Spirit of God. This Spirit is promised "to those that ask"²⁶. Our fruit therefore unto Holiness being according to the measure of the Grace bestowed upon us, it will chiefly depend on the diligence of our application to him, who hath the fulness of it to bestow.

Prayer is the desire of the heart after God. It arises from a sense of want, acts in dependence on the promise, and expects an answer according to its necessities. "For they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled"²⁷. Holiness of heart and life is Prayer carried into practice. As we are diligent in the one, we shall find correspondent effects in the other. The soul that goes continually to the throne of Grace, and lives through the day in the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, cannot but feel a determi-

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nation

²⁶ Luke xi. 13.²⁷ Matt. v. 6.

nation of heart against sin; a labour "to perfect holiness in the fear of God", and such a sense of the divine presence as is at once restraining and transforming.

Whoever hath read the histories of the holiest men will find them to be remarked, as peculiarly men of Prayer. Whilst on the other hand, no sooner doth any man begin to turn back, than his first declensions are usually most visible in his *closet*; until, the dominion of sin returning, Prayer is totally laid aside. For if Prayer does not make us leave sin, sin will soon make us leave Prayer. At least if the form be observed, all the power of Prayer will be gone. The lips and not the heart will be found speaking before God.

Our blessed LORD himself, as man, thus obtained the power of submitting wholly to his Father's will. He "was heard, when with strong crying and tears he made supplications"²⁸. And if HE was thus made perfect and obtained grace, how much more have we need to redouble our requests, and seek herein especially to copy his example?

Prayer

²⁸ Heb. v. 7.

Prayer is of various kinds, *public*, *family* and *private*. He who would have his fruit unto Holiness must "abound in all prayer" and supplication in the Spirit, and watch "thereunto with all perseverance"²⁹. *Public* worship is a most blessed exercise, and most influential on the practice of Holiness. They who heartily join in it, will necessarily feel their hearts quickened to every good word and work, towards those with whom they have united their voices in these solemn exercises. "Where two or three only have consented together to ask any thing", God hath assured us, he will give it³⁰. And how much more may we be confident, that our mutual supplications and intercessions shall find an answer of peace, when in the great congregation, with one mind and one mouth, we consent to pour out our desires before the throne of Grace? *Family* worship is also most requisite in order to Holiness. As the Prophet, directed by the Spirit, calls upon God "to pour out his fury upon the families which call not on his name"³¹: so we may be assured that God's peculiar blessing will rest upon the houses where his honour dwelleth.

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What

²⁹ Ephes. vi. 18.³⁰ Matt. xviii. 19.³¹ Jer. x. 25.

What can be imagined so effectual to restrain ourselves and all under our roof from offending? What so powerful to quicken our concern about pleasing and serving the LORD, as the sense of his nearness to us, and our dependence upon him? And what will so effectually tend to beget this, as a constant, open joint-acknowledgment of his goodness, and supplication for his grace? What can lay upon ourselves more striking obligations to go in and out before our households, examples of Faith and Godliness, than the remembrance of our prayers with them and for them? And what so likely to be influential on *their* hearts, as joining with us in ardent petitions for Grace, hearing their case importunately spread before God, and the solemn engagement repeated, "that we and our house will serve the LORD"³²? Let the Masters of prayerless families tremble. Ungodliness must be in their dwellings. Their Childrens, their Servants blood, as well as their own, is upon their heads. But especially must *private* Prayer be exercised. We "must speak" to our Father which is in secret³³; must speak to him with the confidence and humble freedom of children; telling him the very

³² Joshua xxiv. 15.³³ Matt. vi. 6.

very secrets of our souls, humbling our hearts for our very thoughts before him, and beseeching him, that knoweth what we need, to supply abundantly our wants in JESUS CHRIST. And this must be done with that importunity and perseverance which our LORD recommends by the parable of the unjust judge, and enjoins, when he bids us "always pray and not faint"³⁴.

How often we should be in secret Prayer it is impossible to determine. Every man's circumstances must be considered, and the peculiar situation he is in. *David* prayed "seven times a day"³⁵; *Daniel* thrice³⁶. But at least Morning and Evening are naturally suggested unto us as the most proper seasons, that we may begin and end the day with God. Whilst throughout the day, whoever are panting after nearness to and communion with God, will send forth many an ardent desire from their hearts in the intervals of leisure; and oftentimes in the midst of business, company or labour, a warm ejaculation will dart upwards, that in silence pierces the clouds, and "ascends as incense"³⁷ before

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³⁴ Luke xviii. 1.³⁵ Psal. cxix. 164.³⁶ Dan. vi. 10.

"before the throne". In this way we may be assured the work of Holiness will advance in our hearts. And when we have endured a little while, all our prayers shall be changed into praises.

Fifthly, To Prayer I add *mutual converse*, as very helpful to the work of Grace. As we are traveling the same road, the experience of others will be the more useful to us. We have the same enemies, the same cause, the same corruptions, the same path of duty to follow, and the same hope of glory in the end: and to secure this it is our wisdom to consult together; "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety"³⁷. We shall need therefore speak often one to another; whether to encourage the feeble-minded, warn the unruly, admonish the rash, or counsel the distressed; and shall find the greatest profit by "confessing our faults one to another, as well as by praying for each other"³⁸. In all other things frequent conversation is thought most useful to accomplish any species of instruction, and why not here also? Indeed we shall know little of the way to heaven, nor shall we walk in it, if we satisfy ourselves,

³⁷ Prov. xi. 14.

³⁸ James v. 16.

ourselves, as the many do, with hearing, it may be, a Sermon on a *Sunday*. We must have these great truths in our mouths on other days, delight to speak of our eternal concerns, and count the blessing of the *communion of saints*, in all the branches of it, among our chief enjoyments upon earth. It is impossible for any Minister in the world to take the full and particular care of each individual of his flock: his work is rather "to preach the word". It is every man's business "to exhort his brother daily"³⁹. And wherever there is any spiritual life among us, there will necessarily arise a desire to converse together about the things of God; to "watch" over one another with a godly jealousy⁴⁰; to open our hearts freely; to speak our suspicions; to rebuke with freedom and tenderness, and to "build up each other in our most holy faith". The practice of true Holiness is never so conspicuous as where this genuine simplicity of heart, and enlarged charity to the brethren, shew themselves by a free and heart-searching conversation together. Self-deceit is then more detected, the principles more sifted, mistakes discovered, backslidings reproved, and if a man sin, he is

³⁹ Heb. iii. 13.⁴⁰ 2 Cor. xi. 2.

is "restored in the spirit of meekness". If I was to ascribe the lukewarm and unornamental walk of those who make a profession of Religion to any *one* cause, perhaps it is as much owing to this as any, that they want the true simplicity of heart which would lead them to more experimental conversation; instead of that trifling, general, unedifying discourse which usually prevails amongst them: A religious kind of Gossiping, and justly censured by those who are *without*, as a prying into others faults, instead of discovering and amending their own.

Sixthly, I would conclude with recommending a serious and devout attendance at the LORD's table. Nothing can have a more direct tendency to quicken us in the good ways of the LORD, than that ordinance in which our SAVIOUR makes all his love to pass before us. What can kindle in our hearts such a flame of love, so greatly confirm our faith, enliven our zeal, increase our hatred of sin, or urge us to copy his example, as when we are remembering the LORD's death, when we are commemorating his blood-shedding for us, reflect upon the evil of sin, and see that holy Lamb of God leading the way before
us

us in the path of righteousness? Hither therefore should we often repair, to renew our solemn surrender of ourselves to him, and to receive the pledges of his everlasting love to us. Whenever we have opportunity with delight approaching his table, and eating and drinking his body and blood, with true discernment, to the strengthening and refreshing our souls. This will continually serve to bind our hearts in bonds of nearer union to our holy Head, and oblige us to walk worthy these solemn engagements "in all holy conversation and godliness; adorning the doctrine of GOD our SAVIOUR"; and convincing the world, that the religion of JESUS hath a power and efficacy to cast the whole man into its mold: not merely to distinguish us from others by a christian name, but by a divine nature: so that we become "one with him and he with us".

Happy are they who in these things seek daily to abide and abound. They cannot fail of success. Holiness thus will become more our habit and disposition; "continually exercising ourselves unto godliness", we shall strengthen ourselves day by day mightily; until all our enemies being put under our feet,

feet, our warfare will be finally ended, and we shall go where there is no more corruption, no more sin, no more enemies, no more danger, no more need of wrestling, watching, praying, labouring; but that which is perfect being come, our work of Holiness will be accomplished, and an eternity of happiness shall receive us. There we shall *see* God; shall be *with him*, and be *like him*, and "enter into" that rest", which no tongue can describe nor heart conceive, nobly called in our Liturgy, "our final consummation in bliss, "both in body and soul, in his eternal glory."

I have only to add my ardent prayers and wishes, that every one of you may be using these means, that you may come to this happy end. And if but one soul only be influenced thereby, I shall think all my pains amply repaid, when I shall meet you in the great day of our Redeemer, and this labour of love among others be laid at his feet to your joy as well as my own. May his Grace bless what his Grace hath helped me to speak, and to HIM shall all the praise and glory be ascribed for ever and ever.

SERMON



S E R M O N XIV.

The Blessedness of the Righteous.



PROVERBS XII. 28.

*In the way of righteousness is life, and in the
path-way thereof there is no death.*

 T is a common and dangerous prejudice which is entertained against the ways of true Religion, that they are dull, forbidding and melancholy: and hence young people especially are discouraged by the gloomy prospect; and regard a life of holiness as obliging them to part with every present enjoyment for austerities and mortifications, little less than a cell and sackcloth. And perhaps the mistakes of some professors of godliness have not a little contributed to confirm these prejudices: who, whilst they have substituted moroseness for gravity, and reckoned a downcast look and darkened brow the proper index of a serious mind,

mind, have put fresh stumbling-blocks in the way of those who judge chiefly by appearances. But there is no real cause for this in the nature of the religion of JESUS. Just the contrary. As none enjoy so much inward peace and serenity, none can have so much cause for cheerfulness as they who, "walking humbly with God", seek in the first place "his kingdom and righteousness"². The sons of God, like *Isaac*, are truly "sons of laughter"; not the boisterous mirth of fools, or the intemperate sallies of wantonness, but an habitual composure and delightful calm, are the privileges of the souls of those who have an interest in everlasting promises, and "are the sons and daughters of the LORD Almighty"³. It is the interest indeed of the grand enemy of souls to misrepresent the paths of duty, to frighten us from pursuing them by lying suggestions; and, like the spies who went up to view the promised *Canaan*, to "bring an evil report on the good land"⁴: thus he discourages the hearts of those who are willing to enter. But "let no man's heart fail"⁵: can it be imagined that God ever intended religion

¹ Micah vi. 8.² Matt. vi. 33.³ 2 Cor. vi. 18.⁴ Numb. xiii. 32.⁵ 1 Sam. xvii. 32.

gion should lessen our happiness below? and that he should leave to a "world lying in wickedness", enjoyments greater than his own children possess? "that be far from him". He hath provided for them upon earth the chief portion, and intends the comforts of their faithful service in this life shall be the foretastes of their eternal blessedness in a better. For "in the way of righteousness", and in this alone, "is life", the truly happy life; and "in the path-way thereof", to all who abide in it, "there is no death"; but glory, honour and immortality, await them in the mansions of bliss above.

To enter more explicitly into the proof of this, I would observe, that happiness is to be obtained either from the gratifications of sense, and the enjoyments of the world, or from the denial of these in a life of Faith and Holiness: which two are contrary the one to the other; and as far as the soul is engaged in the pursuit of the one, it will despise or disrelish the other. Now if it can be proved that the world and the things of it cannot afford us the happiness we want, and that the service of the LORD, and the consciousness of his favour, can "give us exceeding
" abundantly

" abundantly above all we can ask or think ⁶ "; then surely we shall act as foolishly as sinfully, to seek " from broken cisterns, which " can hold no water ⁷ ", those draughts of happiness, which the living waters that flow from the *rock* CHRIST can only minister to the soul.

The world promises happiness from three great sources; *Pleasure, Riches, and Honour.* But neither of these fulfil their promises to us either in life or death. The " god of this " world, who was a liar from the beginning ⁸ ", doth ever prove so to those who, deceived by his offers, pursue as their happiness " the " things which are seen and temporal, instead " of the things which are not seen and are " eternal ⁹ ".

I. The world promises us happiness from the enjoyment of *Pleasure.* Decked in the attire of fashion, this smiling *Delilah* " fitteth " in the high places of the city"; and with inviting tongue deludes the young and thoughtless into her snare, with assurances of every bliss. " I have perfumed my bed with myrrh " and cinnamon; come, let us take our fill " of

⁶ Ephes. iii. 20.

⁷ Jer. ii. 13.

⁸ John viii. 44.

⁹ 2 Cor. iv. 18.

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" of love until the morning, let us solace
 " ourselves with loves ¹⁰ ". But how are these
 promises fulfilled? Scripture and experience
 will quickly determine.

Who of all men under the sun ever more
 diligently sought happiness from indulgence
 than *Solomon*? or who had such opportunities
 of boundless gratification? A King, absolute
 in his government, flowing with abundance,
 blest with the most refined taste, and endued
 with the tenderest sensibility: see him eager in
 the pursuit, and determined to spare no pains
 or cost to taste the sweetest draughts of that
Circean cup. " I said in my heart, Go to now,
 " I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy
 " pleasure ¹¹ ". Straight Pleasure and Mirth
 rang through his palaces; Luxury crowned
 the board, Wine sparkled in the flowing bowl,
 Harmony charmed the ear, and Passion rioted
 in the arms of Beauty: thus for a while the
 Court of *Comus* was in *Zion*. " I withheld not,
 " says *Solomon*, my heart from any joy ¹² ". But
 after trial did it recommend the experiment?
 No; " Behold, this also is vanity. I said of
 " laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what
 " doth it ¹³ " ? These poor unsatisfying delights

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intirely

¹⁰ Prov. vii. 18.

¹¹ Ecclef. ii. 1.

¹² Ecclef. ii. 10.

¹³ Ecclef. ii. 2.

intirely disappointed his appetite; an immortal soul could taste no real joy from the low gratifications of a beast, however refined.

And faith not every day's experience the same? Look into your own heart, and say, what happiness have all your pleasures brought you? Have you not ever been disappointed in their possession, and grasped a shadow where you thought to embrace a substance? Your heart hath beat high in the prospect of some delightful scene; but when it came, it palled upon the taste, was rather tiresome than pleasing, and disgusted more than it delighted you. And in an hour of retirement, when reflection returned, and the delusions of imagination gave way to the just remonstrances of conscience; how sensibly and painfully have you felt, that you chased a phantom of happiness, which proved to be real "vanity" and vexation of spirit? You beat the dull round of pleasure, not so much for any real joy you tasted in it, as because you knew not how otherwise to employ yourself; and took refuge in this course of studied forgetfulness, to avoid the disagreeable task of looking inward, and to silence the secret discontent of an unsatisfied mind. The absence of God,
the

the fountain of all consolation, hath left a void which nothing but himself can fill.

This is all the happiness of the young, the gay, and the admired: yea, too often (shameful to tell) of those also, whose desires of Pleasure have outlived their power of enjoyment; and wrinkles and gray hairs proclaim their folly as great as their sin. And is it for this that Religion is neglected, and all the pleasures of CHRIST's delightful Service scorned and rejected!

But there are delights to be found in the ways of CHRIST which a pleasure-loving world "knoweth not of. Not as the world "giveth, says he, give I unto you¹⁴". No: his "joy is such as strangers to him inter-
"meddle not with¹⁵"; it is a pleasure suited to the state of an immortal soul; a pleasure arising from the sense of the favour and love of the ever-blessed GOD; a pleasure which immediately flows from the service we are engaged in, and accompanies the soul in every reflection upon it; a pleasure that rising within in the heart, bursts forth in streams of peace and joy, and continues increasing to eternity, "as a well of water springing up into

X 2

"ever-

¹⁴ John xiv. 27.

¹⁵ Prov. xiv. 10.

"everlasting life"¹⁶. The earthly vanities you pursue, estrange your hearts farther from GOD than they are by nature. These carnal delights debase the soul, and forge new chains to keep you eternal prisoners under the bondage of corruption: "for his servants ye are to whom" "you obey". And how can there be pleasure in slavery, or happiness in chains? But when you return to CHRIST as your portion, tired with the fruitless pursuits of the past, mourning over so much time abused, so many talents squandered, so much forgetfulness of GOD; then you begin to enter into rest. CHRIST shews you in his blood the purchase he hath made for you of present happiness and future glory; and invites you to come to "fountains of living waters, instead of the" "broken cisterns" at which you have toiled so long in vain to draw. "Being justified by" "Faith, we have peace with GOD"¹⁷. And these are among the first-fruits of the Spirit, which they who believe in him do receive, "peace and joy"¹⁸. It is true, to a pleasure-loving soul these, like objects seen by a jaundiced eye, are ever misrepresented. The way to them through the valley of humiliation looks forbidding; and a life of self-denial and "mortification

¹⁶ John iv. 14.¹⁸ Gal. v. 22.¹⁷ Rom. v. 1.

"tification of our members upon earth", necessary to our continuance in his love, seems to promise nothing but wretchedness. But they who make the trial find the difference, and are ready to set their seal to God's truth; and to declare that they have not been, as before, disappointed of their hopes. Each step taken in CHRIST's ways brings pleasantness and peace. The very mournings of the soul returning to its rest in him are delightful; and none know the joy of the tears of penitence but those who drop them. Rough as the way appears, it is but as the gloomy avenue (not in itself destitute of pleasure) which opens to some delightful prospect: and these sweet sorrows are quickly followed by "peace and joy in believing"¹⁹. Nor for a time only, but all life through the prospect brightens, the pleasure is heightened. The intercourse of the believing soul with God in secret meditation; the communion maintained with him in acts of prayer, and silent aspirations to him; the growing conformity of our hearts to his image, who is "glorious in holiness"; the different joy that Christian fellowship brings from any of the friendships of this world; together with the reviving hope

X 3

of

¹⁹ Rom. xv. 13.

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of, and eager looking for, "that glory which shall be revealed in us"²⁰; when from drinking of the streams below we shall go to drink at the fountain-head above; *these* are sources of solid, substantial, rational pleasures, as much superior to the poor joys of sense, as the mild sunshine and genial warmth of a long and temperate summer exceed the suddenly expiring and crackling blaze of thorns.

II. The world proposes happiness to others in affluence. Money is counted "the one thing needful": Money is supposed to bring all the other blessings of this life with it. Under this persuasion, like the horse-leach's two daughters, the worldly mind cries, "Give, give"²¹; joining house to house, and field to field"²²"; and herein seeks its felicity. But of this it may be said, happiness is not here. The world cannot give it: its abundance usually removes us farther from it; will not permit us to know rest or peace. On principles of Reason it should seem evident, that all the treasures upon earth can never satisfy a soul that is immortal; and scripture fully assures us of it. "A man's life (meaning the comfort of it) "consisteth not in the abundance
" of

²⁰ Rom. viii. 18.

²¹ Prov. xxx. 15.

²² Isai. v. 8.

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“ of the things he possesseth ²³ “. St *Paul*, describing those who substitute gain for godliness, informs us, that “ they who will be rich “ fall into temptation, and a snare, and into “ many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown “ men in perdition and destruction ²⁴ “. And our blessed LORD hath left us this awful declaration, “ How hardly shall they that have “ riches enter into the kingdom of God! It is “ easier for a camel to go through the eye of “ a needle, than for a rich man to enter into “ the kingdom of God ²⁵ “. Surely then such acquisitions are little suited to administer the joy they promise. And whose experience doth not witness it? we foolishly call the rich *happy*. But could we see their anxious care, their inward restlessness, the misery of desires delayed or disappointed, which sometimes attends even the most fortunate; could we know their constant fears of losing, and thirst for more, which suffers them not to enjoy their present gains; could we follow one “ making haste to be “ rich “ through all his toils and labours, his weary days and sleepless nights, and all his various vexations; we should be fully convinced of the truth of *this*, that he who increaseth riches increaseth sorrow. I may

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appeal

²³ Luke xii. 15.

²⁵ Matt. xix. 24.

²⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 9.

appeal to every man's heart who hath sought happiness from this quarter, if this hath not been his case. You promised yourself you should by and by be happy, when the other thousand was added to your stock, or the next purchase enlarged your estate: you had your wish, and yet you still wanted; something was lacking. You proposed new additions, and waited for your happiness again. But a new thirst urged you again to new toils: and if the time should ever come that you shall think you have enough, and, like the rich man in the Gospel, "begin to pull
 " down your barns and build greater; and
 " are ready to say to your soul, Soul, thou
 " hast much goods laid up for many years;
 " take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry²⁶": then expect the final disappointment, in that alarming message, "Thou fool, this night
 " thy soul shall be required of thee²⁷".

Such is all the happiness of those who love this present world, and "trust in uncertain
 " riches more than in the living God²⁸".

But hath not CHRIST something more *satisfying* to bestow; something more *durable* to

²⁶ Luke xii. 18.²⁷ Luke xii. 20.²⁸ 1 Tim. vi. 17.

to give to those who seek their happiness in him? Yes, verily. "I counsel thee, says he, "to buy of me fine gold, that thou mayst "be rich"²⁹. CHRIST is a portion, adequate to the boundless desires of the soul; and "the unsearchable riches of his Grace" make the possessor at once affluent and happy. What are beds of sapphires, or rocks of diamonds, compared with that blood which sprinkles us from our sins; the pardon of the least of which the universe cannot purchase? Is not the gift of Faith "more precious than "gold which is tried in the fire"³⁰? and every divine temper better than "clothing of "wrought gold"? These are present possessions, more substantial goods than the treasures of both the *Indies*. Yet "here is not our "abiding city": this is not our inheritance, our home. We look for "an inheritance "incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not "away"³¹. Treasures laid up for us in a kingdom, where moth doth not corrupt, nor "thieves break through and steal"³². A mansion prepared for us in the city of our God; "a city, whose streets are gold, whose gates "are pearl, and whose foundations are pre-
cious

²⁹ Rev. iii. 18.

³¹ 1 Peter i. 4.

³⁰ 1 Peter i. 7.

³² Matt. vi. 20.

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"cious stones"³³. The moment therefore we begin to find our ALL in CHRIST, tormenting care and restless anxiety no longer disturb our repose: we "rise up in peace, for the LORD sustaineth us"; we lie down without a fear of losing what we have laid up with him, "who is able to keep that good thing we have committed to him against that day"³⁴. Thus we can always say with the blessed Apostle, "I possess all things, and abound"³⁵. We have learnt that great lesson, "in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content"³⁶; and find that godliness with contentment is "great gain"³⁷.

Let any man compare this state of a soul walking in the way of righteousness with the former; and say, if such an one hath not chosen the *better part*. And this is not an ideal character; it is, blessed be GOD! the experience of thousands, who every day "go on their way rejoicing"; and of many too, who, under the severest pressures of poverty and want, find in JESUS CHRIST that *hid treasure*³⁸ they would not exchange for "thousands

³³ Rev. xxi. 10—19.

³⁵ Phil. iv. 18.

³⁷ 1 Tim. vi. 6.

³⁴ 2 Tim. i. 12.

³⁶ Phil. iv. 11.

³⁸ Matt. xiii. 44.

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"sands of gold and silver. For GOD hath
"chosen the poor in this world, rich in Faith,
"and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath
"promised to those that love him³⁹". It is
true, the present comfort which the riches of
CHRIST administer above the vain fashion
of a world which "perisheth in the using",
may hardly be made evident to the worldly-
minded, "the god of this world having blinded
"their eyes⁴⁰"; yet is it experimentally known
by those who possess it; and rejoiced in, as
the most enduring substance, the most satisf-
fying reality.

III. The world seeks to ensnare mens souls,
and promises them happiness in the possession
of *Honour*. And indeed, to be distinguished
in the world, treated with respect, spoken of
with admiration, carested by superiors, and
imitated and admired by equals as a pattern;
these are things exceeding pleasing to the heart
of a natural man, and engage many far above
the vanities of pleasure or the sordidness of
gain. Yet doth the desire of worldly esteem
remove the soul as much from true happiness
as either of the former. The enjoyment
arising from the Honour which cometh from
man

³⁹ James ii. 5.

⁴⁰ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

man stands continually on a precarious foundation; it totters before every blast of disrespect, and every rumour of malevolence. Even here below, "like grass on the housetop, it often withereth before it is plucked up". For what can stand before envy? The hopes of men, like bubbles in the air, usually burst as they expand. The labours of Ambition are disappointed, the pride of Honour mortified, the idol of Reputation broken to pieces, and the Friendships of the world generally faithless. Would a man who hath made this his road to happiness but reflect, he would be obliged to confess, that he had been torturing himself to conform to the humours and fashions of the world, seeking a phantom of reputation light as a shadow, grasping after a distinction vain and insignificant, making his happiness depend on the beck or breath of a worm like himself, and storing up for himself many sorrows, which in the present chagrin he must be often exposed to, or (if he should be happily brought to a sense of this folly and sin) in breaking those bands of esteem, and getting rid of the connections which were before the business and desire of his life. Indeed it is not in

is not in man to communicate it to others. It were absurd indeed to suppose, that GOD would suffer *any* of his creatures to enjoy a happiness independent of himself. And more so, that *sinful men*, whom misery follows as their shadow, should be able thus to make each other happy.

But what shall we say when we consider farther, what GOD hath declared of such lovers of human honour: ⁴⁰ Cursed is the ⁴¹ man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh ⁴² his arm ⁴³. The friendship of the world is ⁴⁴ enmity with GOD. Whosoever will be the ⁴⁵ friend of the world is the enemy of GOD ⁴⁶. How can you believe who seek honour one ⁴⁷ of another ⁴⁸? If I yet pleased men, I should ⁴⁹ not be the servant of CHRIST ⁵⁰. Go then, and with these express declarations of GOD against you, dare to be happy. O wretched happiness of the world, that hath the curse of GOD resting upon it for ever!

But in the ways of righteousness is true happiness arising from true honour, ⁵¹ the ⁵² honour which cometh from GOD ⁵³. An honour that depends not on the breath of man

to

⁴¹ Jer. xvii. 5.

⁴³ John v. 44.

⁴² James iv. 4.

⁴⁴ Gal. i. 10.

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 to give or take away. An honour the highest
 any mortal is capable of conceiving or enjoy-
 ing. " Behold, says St *John*, what manner of
 " love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that
 " we should be called THE SONS OF GOD ⁴⁵ ".
 What *dignity* like this, to be " the heirs of
 " God and joint-heirs with CHRIST ⁴⁶ "? The
 highest pinnacle of human glory is infinitely
 more beneath it, than earth is distant from
 the remotest star. What *connections* can be so
 great and honourable as " fellowship with the
 " Father and with his Son JESUS CHRIST ⁴⁷ "?
 No favour here will be denied us. " Ask,
 " and ye shall receive ⁴⁸ ". For he " hath
 " never said to any of the seed of *Jacob*, Seek
 " ye my face in vain ⁴⁹ ". What *honour* can
 be equal to *that* which the God of glory be-
 stows on his favourite children? " Those that
 " honour me I will honour ⁵⁰ ". Or what
regard so desirable as his? " If a man keep
 " my commandments, my Father and I will
 " love him, and come unto him, and make
 " our abode with him ⁵¹ ". And their " fa-
 " vour is better than the life itself ⁵² ". A
 favour, more enduring than the foundations
 of

⁴⁵ 1 John iii. 1.

⁴⁷ 1 John i. 3.

⁴⁹ Isai. xlv. 19.

⁵¹ John xiv. 23.

⁴⁶ Rom. viii. 17.

⁴⁸ John xvi. 24.

⁵⁰ 1 Sam. ii. 30.

⁵² Psal. lxiii. 3.

of the earth ; not like the precarious esteem of man, but arising from the everlasting love and faithfulness of God. A favour, which secures our happiness when all below threatens to destroy it. A favour, that makes the possessor of it superior to all human disgrace, unmoved at reproach, satisfied under oppression, and welcoming the cross of CHRIST with all its ignominy. A due sense of the nature of this favour it was which wrought in *Moses* to " count the reproach of CHRIST " greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*⁵³ ; " greater honour than to be called the son of " *Pharoah's* daughter⁵⁴ ". This made the disciples of JESUS come from stripes and imprisonment, " rejoicing that they were counted " worthy to suffer shame for his name sake⁵⁵ ". Now surely these must be paths of true Happiness, that can thus make the soul to cease from man, to rejoice in tribulation, to enjoy itself independent of the world ; honoured of God when most despised of man, and peaceful and easy, even when " cast out as the filth " and offscouring of all things".

Thus here *below*, the soul which makes CHRIST its portion, his word its guide, his will

⁵³ Heb. xi. 26.

⁵⁴ Heb. xi. 24.

⁵⁵ Acts v. 41.

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will its pleasure, his grace its riches, his
honour its ambition, his service its delight,
" holds on its way and waxes stronger and
" stronger "; enjoying the present sense of the
divine favour, and happy in the assured hope
of the " glory, honour and immortality pre-
" pared for him in heaven ⁵⁶ ss.

The happiness of the way of righteousness
is yet more convincingly felt when death
comes to put a final period to this mortal
scene. This awful hour, that strips off the
tinsel coverings of folly, stamps vanity on all
beneath the sun, and shews the insignificance
of time, and the importance of eternity, dis-
plays peculiarly the delights of the religion
of Jesus. What can the world in that day
offer its foolish votaries? Will a party of
pleasure suit the chamber of disease? or the
songs of folly any more delight the ear that
listens with restless impatience to the striking
hour? What music will harmonize with
dying groans? or what enjoyment can the
brilliant or brocade afford, when the shroud
is ready to supplant them? Will the spark-
ling bowl revive any longer when the parched
tongue begins to falter? or beauty *kindle*
the

⁵⁶ Rom. ii. 7.

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the unballowed fire when death sits on the eyelids, and chilling coldness begins to creep over the heart? Alas! too late! "Vanity of
"vanities, all is vanity"⁵⁷, is now seen in characters too legible to be overlooked. The retrospect on a life spent in Pleasure, / in Plays, and Operas, and Drums, and Routs, and Balls, and Cards, and idle Visitings, or those lower scenes of vanity which equally engage the vulgar mind; even *these* (supposing we are free from the grosser pollutions of the world) will fill the soul with pangs of remorse and foreboding fears. Then shall we know what we have lost by neglecting JESUS and the ways of righteousness; and be made to feel, what before we would not attend to, that these were not the paths of real Pleasure; were miserable comforts; unable to abide the test of a dying hour. "Ah Pleasure,
"Pleasure, (will such an one say) thou forsakest! thou destroyer of my soul! Thou
"once smiledst as with the charms of innocence, now I feel thee "sting as a viper"⁵⁸.
"Where are thy promises of delight? Fool
"that I was to believe thee; and for the unsatisfying gratifications of sense, to reject
"the real joy which JESUS, that neglected
Y "Saviour,

⁵⁷ Eccles. i. 2.

⁵⁸ Prov. xxiii. 32.

“Saviour, offered to give me at this hour,
 “Now I am comfortless; I have trifled away
 “my golden sands; I have forgotten God,
 “and he hath forsaken me. How dearly
 “have I bought my vanities? The pleasures
 “of sin were but momentary, but the pains
 “of it are eternal.” Such reflections will
 often arise, and close the scene of vanity.
 And the dying hour will extort those confessions of truth from the conscience, in spite of the cruel kindness of Friends and Physicians, labouring to amuse and divert from these racking thoughts the soul which stands upon the verge of eternity.

But will *Riches* bear that day's trial better? Ah! they who have “put in the fine gold
 “their confidence”, will find that “it profits not in a day of wrath⁵⁹”. When death lifts his arm, and, swift as lightning, his winged messengers, disease and pain, enter the heart, vain is the hoarded treasure. See that generally esteemed happy man, who trusted in Riches, stretched upon the bed of languishing; his body is panting for breath; his throat is parched; his heart flutters; his eyes grow dim; restless he turns, and turns
 again;

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again; sleep hath for^{sa ken}look his eyelids, pain tortures him every moment, and life's silver cord is loosing. What joy now can Riches bring? Surround his dying bed with bags of gold, will they alleviate the pains of the body, purchase a moment's respite from death, or silence the agonizing remonstrances of conscience? Alas! a golden god is a dumb idol, neither "able to kill nor make alive". Then, where earth and only earth hath been the pursuit, what a wretched state must it needs be, to be torn from all men counted Happiness, to leave this dear world behind them for ever, to go—ah, whither? not to "treasures laid up for them in heaven", not to the place, "where they have made themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness"; but where that *rich* man went, who "lift up his eyes in torment"⁶⁰, because in this life he had received "his good things, and was rich in this world, but was not rich towards God"⁶¹.

Now this is the boasted happiness of numbers; this the unutterable Pleasure of dying worth so many thousand pounds. O the strange stupidity of man!

Y 2

Nor

⁶⁰ Luke xvi. 23.

⁶¹ Luke xii. 21.

Nor will *Honour* or *Esteem* make our departure at all more satisfactory. What will it then avail you, that you have been caressed in the world when you are ready to leave it? If you have made *Distinction* your joy, how will your pride be mortified when you go to the grave and mix with common dust, where no crouded levee attends you, unless the worms which cover you?

The learning is certainly desirable when sanctified by grace, yet If *Learning* hath been your idol, you will find no difference in death; "the wise man dieth as the fool, and then all his thoughts perish"⁶². Nor will any of your attainments in science, your skill in languages, the refinedness of your taste, or depth of your penetration, in that day profit you more than they did the great *Grotius*, who with his dying lips is reported to have complained, *Heu vitam perdidit operose nihil agendo*; "I have wasted my life in incessant toil, and have done nothing."

What satisfaction will it be to you, that, after you are dead, your name shall be engraved in the annals of Fame, if it be not found "written in the Lamb's book of life"?

All

⁶² Eccles. ii. 16.

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All your *Honours* then will be as insignificant as the escutcheons on your coffin; and stand you in no more stead either to comfort your poor soul, or to acquit you before the God "who is no respecter of persons" ⁶³ 33.

Such thoughts perhaps may find their way to you at last, and cannot but produce self-condemnation and heart-rending anguish: proofs too pregnant, that the ways which brought you hither, though strewed with flowers, were neither the paths of life below, nor of hope above.

But in that awful season, when all human comforts fail, the ways of righteousness, that were ever Life and Happiness, then peculiarly are endeared to us; for "in the path-way" thereof there is no death". The living image of God, the real Christian sets like the western sun after its shining course, not lost in the ocean of the grave, but onward moves to illumine a new horizon. His pleasures upon earth were all spiritual; his chief joy was "a reconciled God in CHRIST", apprehended by faith as his covenant God, his everlasting portion: "for this God, he says, "is my God for ever and ever, he shall be
" my

⁶³ Acts x. 34.

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" my guide even unto death ⁶⁴ ". What wonder then, if, when he knows he is hastening to his blissful presence, " to see him as he " is ⁶⁵, face to face ⁶⁶ ", his heart exults in the expectation? His highest joys here on earth were still imperfect; and, though infinitely superior to the poor joys of sense, unspeakably below what he hopes for in that kingdom, " where God hath prepared for those " that love him such good things as pass " man's understanding ⁶⁷ ". He looks back on the past; (for the reflection is pleasing) and whilst with thankfulness he traces the evidences of God's love, adores the Grace which he hath tasted; disclaims all merit, yet confident " in hope of the glory which shall be " revealed, expects eternal life the gift of God " in JESUS CHRIST ⁶⁸ ". His present peaceful state amply repays all the labours of a life of righteousness; and if, instead of the comforts which have followed him all the days of his pilgrimage, he had never tasted ease before, he would confess that the paths which led him to such happiness in the pangs of death, must needs be paths of life and peace. Eternity now opens its unbounded prospect; " the

⁶⁵ CROWN

⁶⁴ Psalm xlviii. 14.

⁶⁵ 1 John iii. 2.

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

⁶⁷ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

⁶⁸ Rom. vi. 23.

"crown of glory, which fadeth not away", shines before him. Angels surround his bed, ready to receive his departing soul, and bear it on their wings to the Paradise of God. Hark! how they shout through the skies! "Lift up your heads, ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, that the Heir of glory may come in"; JESUS, the God of Angels, stands ready to welcome him to his bosom, and place him at his right hand on a throne of glory. "They shall sit down with me, says he, on my throne, as I am set down with my Father on his throne"⁶⁹. Far therefore from trembling at the thoughts of parting from the body, as the pleasure-loving, the rich, the esteemed of this world, who have received their consolation; far from the desire to stay, or casting longing, lingering looks behind on a world he knows not how to part with; the *believing soul* stretches forth itself to heaven, looks upwards and forwards with delight, nor dreads the dark valley of the shadow of death; for there stand the golden gates of life and immortality. Big with the expectations of eternal glory, ravished with the foretastes of his mighty bliss, the soul burns with the very fervent desire it hath

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hath " to depart and be with CHRIST, which
" is far better ⁷⁰ ". And in a moment all its
desires are accomplished ; " Mortality is swal-
" lowed up of life ⁷¹ ".

These are glorious and reviving truths ;
not the flights of fancy, but the declarations
of God, and witnessed to by the death of
thousands, who, with good old *Simeon*, have
cried, " Now, LORD, lettest thou thy servant
" depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy
" salvation ⁷² " : and triumphed in the jaws of
death ; " O Death, where is thy sting ! O
" Grave, where is thy victory ⁷³ " !

Such are the issues of the paths of righte-
ousness. Enough indeed to make the wicked
say, " Let me die the death of the righteous,
" and let my latter end be like his ⁷⁴ ". But
we must first be found in the way of Holiness,
if we would partake in the comforts of it.
My brethren, if you approve the character as
excellent, and would enjoy this blessedness,
then " go and do likewise ".

⁷⁰ Phil. i. 23.

⁷¹ 2 Cor. v. 4.

⁷² Luke ii. 29.

⁷³ 1 Cor. xv. 55.

⁷⁴ Numb. xxiii. 10.



